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## EDITORIAL

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Before the war it was not unusual for Promotion Examination papers to ask officers to consider the effect of modern weapons on some such battle as

**The War** Waterloo. Bewildered subalterns searched earnestly for any possible reason for fighting at Waterloo if either side had had even one modern weapon, and finally comforted themselves with the old Promotion examination slogan: "Look at the syllabus and you will wonder how any one passes; look at the captains and majors and you will wonder how any one fails."

There is however an easier and more profitable feat of imagination for soldiers to attempt to-day: What would have happened if Germans, instead of Italians, had been opposed to us at the battle of Sidi Barrani? A lot of the future of the war depends on the answer, for there is little doubt that one day Germans will be opposed to us under similar conditions.

On present information it appears that the Italian army held a line of fortified areas from Sidi Barrani on the coast, southwards into the desert. Sidi Barrani was large and well garrisoned, the most southerly areas were held by specially trained desert troops who had considerable mobility. In the centre the construction of the defended areas was deliberately hindered and harassed by our mobile troops and the defences were far from complete when the attack was launched on them. The attack drove northwest to the sea and isolated the fort of Sidi Barrani which was then attacked and taken by deliberate but rapid assault. The Italian troops in the south appear to have been dispersed against air attack rather than concentrated against land attack; and this is always going to be a difficult balance to strike for both sides.

In brief, the Italians tried to adopt a system of defended areas and the system broke down because none of them held out. The reason was largely moral, influenced no doubt by our troops achieving surprise. The forward troops can hardly have been said to have died at their posts; they surrendered. The other main factor in their defeat has been mentioned, namely, that they dispersed to avoid air attack.

The German army's morale is sufficiently high to stand air attack when concentrated to meet land attack; and also to hold their defences against reasonable odds. The odds were unreasonable in the centre where the main attack fell, but reasonable at Sidi Barrani and in the south. Thus it is fair to assume that, against Germans, the first phase of the battle would have ended with the enemy's centre broken, our troops on the coast behind Sidi Barrani, and both the southern enemy force and Sidi Barrani still holding out; the former partially isolated, the latter wholly so.

It is then a nice military problem whether we should have continued the advance before or after reducing the two enemy fortresses within our lines. In the battle of France the Germans continued the advance and only in one instance did they pay for it; in that instance it was because we had mobile troops with which to make a sortie at their rear. In that lies the real solution. If Sidi Barrani had contained a strong mobile force it could not have been ignored, for it would have constituted too great a threat to leave imperfectly guarded, and too great a drain on our forces to be fully beleaguered whilst the advance continued.

It may not be wrong to expect the war, in whatever theatre, to take the form of rapid deep thrusts resulting in isolation of parts of the enemy forces, followed by sieges of, and sorties from, the enemy posts which hold out. On the result of the sieges and sorties will depend where the front stabilises in preparation for the process to be repeated. If this sequence of thrust, siege and sortie is correct it is apparent that infantry roles also fall into three categories. A mobile infantry is needed to accompany the thrusting force (and not the least of their tasks may be the collection of prisoners), static infantry are wanted to defend the fortresses which are the foundation of the fronts, and assault infantry are needed to reduce the fortresses. Whether the same infantry can fulfil all these roles is doubtful; and the Germans, who have twelve different types of infantry, seem to think not.

The Greek successes against the Italians were not universally foreseen. Perhaps the average officer's knowledge of the Greek war was confined to the fact that it retreated rather hastily from Anatolia after the last war and that some of its men wore skirts and poofs on their shoes. In fact, the Greek soldier is extraordinarily tough as will be well known to those who served in the Macedonian Campaign of the



last war and his only trouble is a strong penchant for politics. He is a bit inclined to hold his own views on the justice of his cause, and not accept the official policy of his government, which is embarrassing in war where "minority reports" are out of place. The semi-dictatorship of General Metaxas has been very good for the army, as only moderate variations from the normal have been allowed in individuals' political views; so the soldiers' energies were diverted to more useful channels. At the same time a number of good officers who were displaced for political reasons have been allowed to rejoin, and no doubt now their country is in danger they will abstain from dabbling in politics. This concentration of effort was assisted by the nature of the war, for any soldier can see the justice of his cause when he is defending his own country against wanton attack.

The fighting itself seems to have been a model of sustained effort on the part of the Greeks and military miscalculation on the part of the Italians. The Greeks are the first nation to face the new problems which arise when fighting the Italians: the collection and disposal of prisoners and war material in vast quantities, and the supply of stores to troops who have struck at iron and penetrated deep into cheese. They seem to have been quick at collecting Italian weapons and vehicles and turning them on the enemy; but, with the vast quantities collected, there must be times when they wished they had whole units trained and available to take over the Italian equipment as fast as it fell into the bag.

Details of the Greek mountain warfare technique are not yet published, but they will be of interest to India. They seem to have been both bold and unsparing of human effort.

\* \* \* \*

The formation of an Army Co-operation Command of the Royal Air Force has been heralded in the Press with approval. It is said that the army can now rely on having all the air support that it desires. The army never could have all the air support that it wants, and there will seldom be enough aeroplanes available to produce all the air support that is desired before, during and after a major land operation. The Army Co-operation Command will ensure that the needs of the army are studied, and are met so far as possible, but they have not got the power to divert the whole resources of the Air Force to the assistance of the army in time of need. This can only be done by the War Cabinet on the advice of their Service

chiefs, so the degree of air support given to the army is dependent more on the advice which is given by the Chief of the Air Staff than on the size of the Army Co-operation Command. The fact that a new Chief of the Air Staff was appointed at the same time as the Army Co-operation Command was instituted is a good omen of a change of policy in this respect.

There is no doubt we have a long way to go before we achieve the same degree of co-operation as the Germans. There is still a separate Air Force war and an Army war on the battlefield, and air resources may be applied to objectives which have no relation to military plans. So long as there is divided command and divergent training for war this is inevitable. For this reason, apart from others, we welcome the appointment of Sir Robert Brooke-Popham as Commander-in-Chief, Far East. As a former infantry soldier, Air Officer Commanding Iraq and Commandant of the Imperial Defence College he is obviously suitable for a combined command. It is to be hoped that this example will be followed and that it will before long become the regular practice to place units of one service under a senior officer of another when circumstances appear to dictate such a course, and to provide him with a combined staff to help him fulfil his functions.

Although the Imperial Defence College and C.I.D. have done much to promote co-operation and mutual understanding, there is much to be said for the formation in each service of a War Staff Corps on the lines of the German Great General Staff. Officers of this category will then be obviously suitable both as commanders and staff officers of combined formations or even for interchange between the respective services.

\* \* \* \*

By signing the Tripartite Pact, Japan has finally appeared in her true colours as an enemy of Great Britain.

**The Far East** , This does not necessarily mean that an immediate attack is to be expected on British possessions in the Far East. In fact, such an eventuality becomes less likely as our strength increases and as the strain of the Sino-Japanese war draws on the economic life of the country.

The treaty is not popular in Japan. Neither Italy nor Germany are in a position to give practical help in subduing China. On the other hand, Great Britain and the United States are Japan's best customers, and it is felt, now that export trade has almost vanished and the army is locked in a seemingly profitless

and endless struggle, that an alliance with the Axis powers can be of little value.

In China there are signs that the war is telling on the life of the country. The financial and economic situation gives cause for anxiety. The reopening of the Burma Road and the provision of credit facilities and loans from Great Britain and the United States should improve conditions. It must not, however, be forgotten that the Chinese have fought alone for over three years and that even a Chinaman's resistance to overwhelming force cannot be prolonged indefinitely.

The capitulation of French Indo-China enabled the Japanese to get supplies of certain essential raw materials, particularly rice and rubber, at a cheap price. This advantage has, to some extent, been offset by the stiff resistance offered by the Dutch to economic demands on the Netherlands East Indies.

There is no sign that the Japanese southern army, which was withdrawn into Tongking, is to carry out the threat of invading Yunnan. This may be due to the difficulty of undertaking such a venture. It is more likely that the troops are required to form the nucleus of a force which is to be stationed at some strategic position, such as Hainan Island. Such a force could be used to intimidate the French, Thais, and the Dutch and could, with very little imagination, be regarded as a direct threat to Singapore.

\* \* \* \*

The army in general has seen and heard little of the Eastern **The Eastern Group** Group Conference though the Conference was **Conference** held almost entirely for the ultimate benefit of the army. The Viceroy invited units of the Empire in the East to send representatives of their organizations engaged in production of war supplies to a conference in India. They accepted and it happened that the United Kingdom was sending a mission to India at the same time on approximately the same subject. This mission, known as the Roger Mission, arrived with knowledge of what war stores were required to be produced by the Eastern Empire and with the purpose of seeing how far these requirements could be met in India. They appropriately joined the conference as the representatives of Great Britain.

The purpose of the conference was to co-ordinate the whole productive capacity of the Eastern Empire; some countries have surpluses of what others require, and each could start new production of some articles more easily than others. These differences should clearly be settled by conference, and, judging from the



final speech of the leader of the Australian Delegation, much has been achieved. "Speaking for myself," he said, "I can say that I have learned much about the needs of other parts of the British Commonwealth comprised in the Eastern Group and also of the capacity of the respective parts to assist in the war effort. It is gratifying to find to what extent we can make a substantial contribution." That in a nutshell is what the conference set out to do and has done. There is still the executive work to be continued; and this, from the army's view, is all that is important. To take a very simple example: the conference may have recommended the establishment of a new shirt factory in India, and it may even have been decided where and how the factory will be built. Before production begins the producer may run short of money, he may have difficulty in getting his raw materials, it may be found that Australia has a surplus of shirt buttons which could economically be carried to the Indian shirt factory, and so on.

All such difficulties must be smoothed out quickly by the body which succeeds the conference. It will need considerable powers, both financial and executive, for it will have to ensure that no essential effort is hindered by lack of money or by lack of material; and even in war vested interest is apt to produce unnecessary shortages.

It will be of interest to see what form the conference's successor takes, and what powers it is given. The army should grudge it no power that it can wield. Until it is formed the Government of India have agreed to keep the work of the conference in motion by maintaining a small staff in Delhi. This may be taken as an indication that the new body will be established in India; but it will not be under the Government of India.

#### The Articles in this Number

"FIFTY YEARS AGO"—An extract from the *U. S. I. Journal* of fifty years ago which shows that our troubles to-day are not new.

"LAND WARFARE" is based on a lecture given to the *U. S. I.* in Simla in August, 1940. The author expresses himself frankly on past ineptitudes and is precise and clear in stating our military needs for the future. The article is not, of course, an official statement.

"AN INTERLUDE IN THE CAMPAIGN IN NORWAY" gives a good account of modern "small-war" technique. It is a type of warfare in which India is always interested.

"LEARNING GREEK" is an opportune member of this series of articles. The author gives facts about the Greek army which make its successes in Albania more easily understood.

"PROBLEM OF FORCE TO SPACE" is an analysis of one aspect of modern war. The author follows the evolution of modern war until he reaches the army that is required to-day.

"SPAIN" deals with the characteristics of the Spanish, with special reference to their value as allies. They are likely to be somebody's ally before the war ends.

"THE ARMY AND CIVIL LIFE—A COMPARISON" is written by an officer who looks at the army, as he finds it, through eyes trained in modern civil life. He suggests many ways in which the army might learn from civil life, and his suggestions are worth consideration by professional soldiers. The fact that some of them are not practicable in the form presented, should encourage further examination, not criticism.

"OFFICERS' MESSES" is a reply to the article "MESSES AND CLUBS" published in October. The author takes a poor view of the earlier article.

"PERSONAL EXPERIENCE" is the first of this "Feature." There are two stories of actual war experience, both of which show that some confusion is a part of battle, however much it may be resented on manœuvres.

"DUFFER IN ASSAM" is a story of forest warfare. The principal character neglects the advice of his elders, and therefore betters, with the usual result.

"SORROWS OF MULLA KURBAN ALI" is a translation of a Persian story. To the occidental mind the ending may appear to be something of an anti-climax. To the Persian the ending appears appropriate and even beautiful.

## "FIFTY YEARS AGO"

*Extracts from "The United Service Institution Journal" of  
January, 1891:*

### THE MILITARY TRAINING OF JUNIOR REGIMENTAL OFFICERS

PAPER READ BY CAPTAIN A. C. MACDONNEL, R.E., D.A.A.G.,  
FOR INSTRUCTION

My experience is that certain portions of the art of war are taught very completely, but that some of the most important of all the branches are, from custom, left almost untouched. It will be well to note the subjects in which a junior officer ought to be instructed, and we can then proceed to discuss how each of them can be developed.

They are classified as follows:

1. Regimental Duties.
2. Drill.
3. Military Law.
4. Duties in the Field.

This is the classification laid down in the "Queen's Regulations."

I do not propose here to say much about the present regimental instruction in the first three, except that I believe that there is every facility and incentive to junior officers to make themselves well acquainted with these duties, but it is with reference to the instruction under the fourth heading I would wish to draw particular attention.

As a rule, the regimental instruction to junior officers in such duties is "nil"! I think I am in a position to say this, not only from my personal knowledge of the "regime" of many regiments, but from the absence of even elementary knowledge on the part of many officers who come under me for instruction in these very subjects.

The arguments usually put forward against carrying out regimental instruction in "Duties in the Field" are as follows:

- (a) There is no time! There are so many things nowadays to look after that there is no time left for anything extra.
- (b) It is very difficult to get your officers and men together for instruction.

- (c) It is very difficult to make out schemes which will commend themselves to every one taking part in the instruction. Every Commanding Officer does not consider it his duty to act as a personal guide or instructor in tactics to those under him.

Taking objection (a) first. This is of course a serious difficulty to be contended against, but I feel quite certain that it is not insuperable.

I conscientiously believe that the officers of our army have their time occupied by military work quite as much as those of other armies, but a great part of such time is uselessly frittered away from want of a good regimental system in carrying out their duties. I would point out that the present programme of regimental instruction ignores generally that part of an officer's profession which may be called the intellectual part, and which alone will bring out his ever increasing interest in it. Prince Kraft says, in talking about the training of a recruit, that if he sees nothing but the barrack square and his barrack room and is employed only in the most mechanical and elementary exercises he will get into a solid state of mind and make no further progress. But if he has an opportunity of occasionally going out into the open, to learn his field exercise, he recovers from the monotony of his elementary training and gets an approximate idea of his work as a soldier together with a fresh desire to fit himself for it.

Now I think the same may be said of officers, who are kept at nothing but their regimental duties and what we have defined in the Queen's Regulations as ordinary drill.

If officers would train those under them always with an idea of a supposed enemy within striking distance, every one would get an approximate idea of his work with a desire to fit himself for it.

I am quite sure that time could be saved from the usual programme of instruction in many ways. Hours are spent at the orderly room of many regiments when the same number of minutes would have been sufficient. The duties of supervision of cleaning equipment, saddlery and horses I think are capable of being more quickly performed, and far less time could be spent on drill movements and manœuvres that would never be utilized in the field, for example, all drills at close touch might be abolished, and everything done at manœuvre (i.e., 30 inches) interval.

## LAND WARFARE

By BRIGADIER E. E. DORMAN-SMITH, M.C.

The simplicity of land warfare was, I believe, referred to by Napoleon, who said that in warfare everything is simple, but went on significantly to add that it was the simple which was difficult.

In the history of land warfare it is only on rare occasions that human communities have been equally prepared at any one time for aggressive action. Normally, the aggressor, a dissatisfied power of some sort, seeks gains in goods and territory, while the possessor of those goods endeavours to ward off attack. Accordingly, continental military thought sums up the basic elements of land warfare into Attack, Defence and Freedom of movement or action.

Of those three principles, Defence is common to aggression or anti-aggression since even the forces of aggression must make their homeland secure from any counter-attack before embarking on their enterprise. In primitive communities, aggressors unless they happen to be nomads from distant lands protected by sea or mountains or great deserts, defend their own cities or villages with walls before they move to attack their more prosperous neighbours. Therefore, throughout history, the first business of communities having anything of spiritual or material value to defend, has been the protection of their property by fortifications. Fortifications are the earliest development in land warfare. But the ultimate object of the aggressor being the reduction of the victim's will to resist by cutting off his means of livelihood, necessitates his entry, with armed forces, into his victim's country. That introduces the second main element, in land warfare, the mobile field army. Now, to defeat the aggressor or to save his own life, the defender may retire within his own fortifications and wait for an opportunity to strike the invader as he moves into the depths of his country. To counter this the invading field army must reduce the strong places containing the defender's mobile forces. This brings us to the factor of siege, and because the overthrow of fortified places by siege cannot usually be undertaken solely by a field army, which is designed for mobile operations and requires means of warfare too heavy and cumbersome to keep pace with it, we get the third element of land armies. Therefore



throughout the history of land warfare, you will find the following three elements in all land armies:

- (a) Fortress holders,
- (b) Field fighters and
- (c) Siege layers,

and though occasionally you will get homogeneous armies the units of which have been equally capable of carrying out these three functions, oftener you will have distinct and separate elements in an army for the three functions. The basic problem of land warfare is therefore to find the proper balance between fortifications, field armies and siege troops. From this brief review we see that the elements of land warfare fall in the end into two main groups—the first group being Fortification and Siege, the second being warfare “in the Field.” Throughout history the balance of importance between these groups, the static and the mobile, has see-sawed. In the days when powerful field armies and their supplies could lie safe behind fortress walls ready to pounce on the rear of armies which left the fortress untaken, fortification and siege formed the primary branch of the science of land warfare. As field armies grew larger (and this awaited the development of the art of maintenance) they could afford to ignore the mobile troops in the fortified places and fortifications because they were of less importance than field armies. But the ultimate instrument of decision in land warfare has usually been the battle between the field armies; it is therefore important to understand the mechanism of battle, because this knowledge is the best guide in organizing a field army.

The first task of any army, whether it fights in a fortress or in the open, is to preserve its means of sustenance. Field armies draw their sustenance from their line of communications, or on occasions from the countryside over which they are fighting, so, broadly speaking, field armies are most vulnerable to an attack from the rear, and this attack is most effective when an army is immobilized by attack, or threat of attack, from the front or flanks. To this end, field armies which do not wish or are unable, to attack, seek to form strong battle fronts which are too extensive to be turned by flank attacks without the attacker's army being broken into two unco-ordinated parts, each weaker than the defender's reserves. On the other hand the attacker by developing greater mobility, endeavours to out-manceuvre the enemy on one or both of his flanks; either to deliver a decisive attack on them or alternatively by feinting against one hostile flank to

make the enemy over-extend and then to break his original front by a direct and violent onslaught. The Defender\* who awaits the attack may, if he decides to give battle either resist and exhaust the enemy in preparation for a counter-stroke or he may by giving ground, draw the attacker into a situation in which he in turn exposes his flank and rear to counter-attack. That was the expedient of Hannibal at Cannae and a similar manœuvre saved the allies at the Battle of the Marne in 1914. In each case, both the attacker and the defender strive at some stage of the battle to bring off the rear attack. A field army must therefore be designed for attack and defence and the ultimate delivery of the rear attack.

In the history of land warfare, the problem of organizing a field army for attack and defence has most commonly been resolved by dividing the army into three main elements:

- (i) A line of battle strong in defence and capable of attack if supported by
- (ii) A fire element; and
- (iii) A mobile assault element for the rear attack.

To make these elements manageable in large armies, they are first grouped into units by functions and those units in turn are grouped into higher formations, either unmixed as regiments or brigades, or into groups containing a mixture of the three elements.

Field armies require the highest possible mobility because mobility added to protected offensive power has throughout history been the secret of the rear attack. An army equal to its enemy in fighting power but 50 per cent. more mobile can do what it pleases with its enemy. The ideal mobility is reached when the line of battle, fire and assault elements are all more mobile than the adversary. On rare occasions in history this ideal has been reached by having all elements in the army mounted, as with the Mongol armies, but normally the assault arm was mounted, the fire element was horse-drawn and the line of battle walked on foot and set the real pace of the army. This was common to all European armies, but even so the army with the highest power of manœuvre on the battlefield normally succeeded in developing a successful flank or rear attack. To-day, though the

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\* In 1914 the Germans threw their whole weight against the Allies' left flank. In 1940 the Germans feinted against the Allies' left by attacking in Holland and north Belgium. The Allies reacted by leaving the frontier fortifications in north France and advancing to Dutch and Belgian assistance and the Germans then broke the Allied centre on the Meuse.

main elements of land armies remain, all, through mechanization can be equally mobile, while wireless control has made possible dispersed manœuvre in the approach and on the battlefield. But to-day a new arm for the rear attack has appeared in the air-borne land soldier.

Supply and the transport of supplies and impedimenta has been a constant preoccupation of armies. All means of supply have been essayed. From living on the country or foraging; living on magazines and supply by mobile wagon trains, down to the elaborate supply system of to-day. But be it realized that neither mobility nor fighting power can be achieved until the maintenance and transport problem has been solved.

The last great constant in war has been the human factor—the leader and the led. The led by training, given normal military virtues, can be shaped into whatever military mechanism we give the commander, but the real commander, although he may be matured by experience and guided by the severe principles of war, is unique, born, not made. It is the art of the commander which applies the principles of war to strike the enemy where, when and how the enemy likes it least.

Our studies of the mechanism and mobility of armies on land should not ignore the important part in land warfare played by sea mobility made possible by sea power. In ancient history the armies of the Mediterranean nations, Greeks, Persians, Carthaginians and Romans fought as armies at sea as well as on land. Sea fighting in fact did not become a specialized business till after the Spanish Armada. But it is rather with sea-carriage of armies than sea fighting that we are now concerned. The seaways have frequently turned the flank of the landways. A "sea-mobile" army has a safe road to the rear attack.

This inconvenient truth is apt to be ignored by the soldiers of continental armies, but islanders whose livelihood depends on the sea and on sea power have no excuse for such ignorance, their armies without sea mobility are only half effective.

Now the history of land warfare has not by any means been one of steady and continuous advance towards the solution of these problems. The ancient Greeks and Romans brought fortification, siege and field warfare to a proficiency which was then lost for over 1,000 years; and even in the best periods of the art of warfare it frequently occurs that armies have been raised and organized with more regard to custom and precedent than to basic principles, though there are many examples to the contrary.



But whenever a mechanism of land warfare has been created and used in accordance with the basic principles of war and in the light of the best available experience, it has triumphed with ease over land forces which, through failing to watch the development of war and to modify their practices accordingly, were quite unable to understand the fate which was awaiting them or to avoid it when it arrived. That is the real meaning of modernization.

Modernization is not a thing of last year or this. It has been going on steadily throughout the centuries. Whenever there has been a really effective army, it has been a thoroughly modern one for the period in which it was built up. Modernization therefore seeks, first, to provide a General with the highest speed of movement; secondly, the best fighting power; and thirdly, an efficient service of maintenance in the field. The task of those who are responsible for the creation of land armies in any epoch is to build up a fighting machine with the most modern weapons and equipment, in the light of the principles of war and the best experiences of the day. The fulfilment of this task demands constant and continuous efforts towards the evolution of better methods and a readiness to scrap the outworn or obsolete, both during actual warfare and the intervals of peace between wars. It is fatal to begin the new war where the last one left off, and this can be clearly shown by the study of the history of land warfare in our own time since 1914.

## PART II

It must be remembered that in 1914 air power was in its infancy. The armies of 1914 were the last in the history of warfare to operate only on the ground. In Western Europe, the field armies assembled behind frontiers protected by fortified places which guarded the main lines of approach. They were organized into infantry divisions which fought on foot and were considered capable of assaulting the enemy's line of battle. They were supported by artillery and they had cavalry divisions for the rear attack. Their weapon basis was the one-man weapon, with a certain amount of automatic firearms amongst the infantry. They were numerically the largest armies which had ever taken the field. Their transport was, as always in the past, horse-drawn. Their tactical idea was based on the flank manoeuvre followed by a cavalry attack against their opponent's rear. They were armies in the tradition of Napoleon and Wellington modified by the

experiences of 1870. But they had *modern* rifles and some modern artillery and no one realized the effect of this modern wine in the traditional bottles except a continental banker named Bloc, who prophesied their utter inability to apply their tactical ideas because of the effect of modern fire power. He was right.

At the outset the fortifications fell with surprising speed because the aggressor had produced secret siege weapons. Then the invasion passed the fortresses and the field armies met and, after a short period of manœuvring, they were locked in a stalemate because unarmoured beings could not face the enormous fire power developed. Out of this evolved the paradox of a connected line of field fortifications which turned into something much more permanent, stretching for hundreds of miles from sea to Alps. The field armies went straight into siege conditions and became fortress troops and siege armies. Both sides then began to increase their own defensive fire power by adding more and more automatic weapons and their offensive element by producing a more numerous and powerful artillery. Each in turn assaulted the other, failed, and then settled down to think again. With the passage of time both sides evolved new weapons and methods—the Germans gas, the Allies the tank, the Germans hurricane bombardment and infiltration tactics by infantry, which the Allies copied. On both sides there was the evolution of the Air Arm, and Land Warfare developed a new dimension. The result was that by 1918 both of these armies, which began as field armies, had succeeded in evolving a siege technique capable of carrying an assault through semi-permanent fortifications and so restoring field warfare, but even when field warfare was restored, neither side ever succeeded in breaking the other's front and developing the rear attack, because the horsed cavalry of the mobile arm was too vulnerable. Moreover, the demands on the production and supply system necessary to provide the armies with the immense quantities of warlike stores and particularly shell placed an intolerable strain on the maintenance system and the effort to turn a field army into a siege army had the inevitable result, that the armies on both sides had become almost powerless to move. Decision in land warfare still awaited the resuscitation of the rear attack to decisive depth. Realizing this the Allies, with the industrial resources of the world behind them, devised a new type of field army for the 1919 campaign—a war machine designed to reintroduce the rear attack, and, comprising some 20,000 armoured fighting vehicles. This new-model field army was to

combine heavy tanks for the frontal assault, mobile tanks for the rear attack, armour-protected infantry for the follow-through, and fire support from the air to cover land movements when the penetration had passed beyond the range of the artillery and the original front; and there were to be armoured supply echelons fit for cross-country movement, and even air-supply. The old army would be left *in situ* to contain its adversary's front while the new moved to the decision. Owing to the German collapse in 1918 under the strain imposed by the blockade this project never eventuated, and the full development of modern Land Warfare was thereby postponed for 21 years.

Meanwhile, the war had spread from the congested battlefields of France into the open lands of Eastern Europe, the deserts, plains and hills of North Africa and Western Asia. In these areas, however large the armies, there was still sufficient room for tactical manoeuvre and therefore, for the flank or rear attack to develop. The British and Indian Cavalry exploited the rear attack in Mesopotamia and Palestine, but the war ended before mechanization of any sort really entered the Eastern theatres. There was, therefore, no real development of modern mobility in those regions and the easy victory of unmodernized forces did much to blind the eyes of those in power to the fact that the day of the horsed soldier in war had passed forever. Thus the Land Warfare of 1914—18 ended at the point when true modernization was about to make a new model army capable of restoring life to the stagnating field armies which had become siege armies. Then came anti-climax, for the collapse of the armies and air forces of Imperial Russia, Austria and Germany, left the Allies in a sort of military vacuum, they were too exhausted to realize that their own destruction at the hands of the Treasury officials of their countries was equally imminent. What survived of the Allied armies differed but little from the armies that took the field in 1914 and drifted into the four years' siege.

In the interval between 1919 and the return match of 1939 the stimulus which the first world war gave to civil industry had its reactions on military evolution. Aircraft evolved out of all recognition. Everywhere motor transport replaced the horse. Inventors were busy on the weapons of the last war, modernizing and improving the types of machine guns, mortars, tanks and artillery which made their first crude appearance in 1917-18. By 1934 a stage had been reached when the makeup of armies no longer depended on the limitations imposed over the whole of history by

horse-and-foot mobility and one-man-one-weapon. New means for improvement on old methods were there for anyone who wanted them and was prepared to use them. A stage had in fact been reached when the authorities responsible for the maintenance of the machinery of land warfare had to choose between two alternatives—the first a rejuvenation of the existing or old model pattern of army, which in the case of the British and French armies were the 1914 models with a top-dressing of 1918 equipment, by eliminating horsed transport, improving the infantry armament, mechanizing and re-equipping the artillery with longer ranged and more powerful weapons, adding a proportion of assault tank units and modernizing the cavalry arm by the substitution of tanks for horses. This process apparently left the basic tactical idea unchanged; so much so in fact that after such a rejuvenation the British army was able, without mental discomfort, to keep in use a Field Service Regulation which had been written before the army had been “Voronoffed.” The second alternative was to return to the conception of 1919 but with all the facilities of 1935 and create new model armies scientifically designed for their special tasks, adapting weapons, mobility, supply systems and so on to the strategical functions which the particular army might be called upon to perform. But to understand the events of 1939-40 it is necessary to see how the contending nations absorbed the new equipment and weapons of war into their military organisms in the interval between the two wars.

Curiously enough, Russia, in spite of her unenviable reputation for military ineffectiveness, was the first great power to remodel her army. By 1935, she was able to show visitors from the British Army that she had taken the lead both in mechanization and in air support for land operations. In fact she seemed to have developed two parallel armies—one the old-fashioned 1914 model of horse, foot and guns, and the other a very highly mechanized armoured and mobile force, air-supplied, air-supported and backed by a large force of air-borne troops whose advanced guard in landing was found by parachute battalions. The underlying tactical theory of the mechanized flank attack or the armoured break-through followed by the rear attack aided by the air arm, air landings and air support, had been very elaborately developed. We shall probably never know how much Russian development owes to German thought and assistance, though there is plenty of evidence that before the rise of the Nazis, the Germans were prepared to collaborate with Russia to defeat the Versailles Treaty.



But this early development of Russia along lines afterwards adopted by Germany is very significant and it seems logical to believe that long before the Nazi revolution the German army was busy absorbing the lessons of the war in the hope of a comeback and working out the practical details in Russia. The Germans had, however, to be careful not to come too clearly into the open; but as early as 1927 the German High Command had formulated their tactical ideas about the next war and based them upon a violent offensive developed at speed, regardless of loss and of what was happening on either flank of the attacking unit or formation.

In General von Seckt's book, "Thoughts of a Soldier," you find the idea of a highly trained and equipped army as the offensive spearhead of a "follow-up" army less mobile and less elaborately equipped. At the same time the Germans resuscitated their air forces, and, when they did so, they went a very long way to harnessing their air power to the land offensive. It now appears that Hitler's offer to drop no bombs beyond 50 miles of the military front was entirely logical and a definite pointer to his intention in war. They also produced with considerable secrecy a tank powerful enough for a frontal break-through against any anti-tank resources of the French or Polish armies and yet sufficiently mobile for a campaign of movement against the rear of the enemy. To accompany these vehicles they had motor-cycle and light infantry divisions, and there is no question but that air supply had been prepared to maintain these spearhead forces. To make the rear attack more sure they had several airborne divisions with parachute-advanced guards, and as with the Russians, it appears that the bulk of the mechanized land force was created independently of the remainder of the army under a separate inspectorate. Quite logically they put a large portion of the anti-aircraft troops under the air arm. The rest of the army, which was by no means allowed to rot, was designed for holding, occupying and following-up. It was mainly infantry with horse-drawn pneumatic-tyred transport, strong in anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons and amply provided with close support and medium artillery. The proportion of the mechanized and airborne forces to the remainder of the Army was 1 to 8. But though the German war machine was primarily designed for offensive warfare, they did not neglect defence. The design and layout of the "West Wall" and the depth of its defensive zone seemed to indicate that they were aware of the connotations of a modern armoured break-through and were determined not to be taken that way themselves.

Thus in Germany, the army and the air arm developed logically and thoroughly for modern land warfare with none of the vacillations and inconsistencies produced by political instability, financial sabotage and inter-service jealousy, which wrecked the armies of the western democracies before they reached the battlefield. Lastly, the Germans did not neglect seaborne mobility as a means of rear attack. They had considerable successes with combined operations in the Baltic in the First World War; the Baltic is ideal for combined sea, land and air training and Germans worked hard to perfect landing operations before war began.

Interestingly enough, Japan is the other modern exponent of the art of combined land, sea and air operations. The outstanding military feature of Japan's war in China—the only one which is new or genuinely modern—has been her highly developed organization for landing troops including a very wide range of motor landing craft launched at the points of landing from special transport ships designed to carry and release them.

At the end of the last war France was left with the largest army in Europe. She had 2,500 tanks, 3,600 aeroplanes and 12,500 cannon, but France had suffered war casualties of over 2,300,000 killed or disabled, and these not only reduced her fighting strength for the future but in some way broke her offensive spirit. The fact that she might yet again have to face the Germans without the help of powerful allies led her to look for assistance from the chain of weak nations on the Eastern flank of Germany; and, when it became clear that these were unlikely to be of any real value, she started to build an expensive line of frontier defences behind which she would mobilize her Field Army. That, of course, was never finished. It stopped where the French, Belgian and German frontiers met. Had it been carried on to the sea, things might have been very different. The French Field Army, as far as one can see, was simply the army of 1918, with increased infantry fire power, a number of heavy tank brigades, a powerful artillery partially mechanized, and a weak mobile arm of some three light armoured divisions and some horsed formations. The tactical idea was based on the frontal battle, a rigid and inflexible line of infantry formations, maintaining a constantly intact front with marked disinclination for sudden or unsupported advances and flank movements. This was the 1918 idea of the wall of men which might become the trench of men if things went wrong. It does not seem to have occurred to the French that this slow-moving, cumbersome and rigid machine, forming under the

protection of an incomplete frontier barrier lacking in depth, even if it were sufficiently large to fill any front which the Germans might attack, was an ideal target for the German army organized on the tactical idea of the unregulated violent offensive designed to drive a rear attack to great depths. Lastly, the French neglected to organize or defend the civilian population in the rear of their armies.

The Polish Army, as far as its field army went, was a bad imitation of the French army. Furthermore, Poland had no frontier fortifications, no modern mobile arm, and a very small air force.

Britain stood committed by the Locarno Pact to support France if attacked by Germany or vice versa. We had a land army which, though responsible for Home defence, the defence of Egypt, the British commitments in the Middle and Far East and the defence of the great naval bases, was the poor relation of the Defence Forces. The restrictions imposed by the rigidly interpreted Cardwell system which tied the home army to the notoriously conservative and obsolete army in India, the increasing age of the senior officers and their dislike of novelty, the dead hands of the Treasury and party politics in England combined to prevent any radical remodelling of the British army. In consequence two years before this war began there were in England four regular infantry divisions, one armoured division, all only partially equipped, and 12 to 14 Territorial Divisions untrained and unequipped. Equipment to arm our air and fortress defences was provided grudgingly. Furthermore, the Treasury obstinately refused to re-equip the small forces in the Middle East, and the army in India was only fit for tribal warfare. With such a hopelessly inadequate army it is not surprising that our tactical ideas were left over from 1918. We reckoned on employing the infantry divisions made more mobile by the substitution of motor transport for horses, supported by an armoured mobile arm in a war of movement in Western Europe. This was and remains the theme of Field Service Regulations, which still puts the infantry before the tank. Just before the war the army in the United Kingdom began an expansion on the lines described in order to fight alongside the French, although this expansion was mainly in the infantry element. There was, however, a strong but submerged feeling in official and non-official circles that if we had to send an army to France it should contain the elements lacked by the French, i.e., armoured and mobile formations. In the end we managed to

place ten modernized infantry divisions alongside the French for the northern battle and we lost everything except the personnel. The armoured divisions did not take part in that fighting; they arrived in France too late. Our failure to produce a modern Field Army was to some extent offset by our care for fortresses such as Singapore. There our grasp of fundamental principles was right. But as soldiers we feel that by far the most noteworthy deficiency was the lack of military air support: the army had no air transport for troops or supplies. There was no possibility of an air-landed rear attack and no air-craft to deliver a tactical bombardment for a follow-up if we outstripped our land artillery.

So in northern France we had the pathetic spectacle of two indifferent armies: one obsolete, the other semi-modernized aligned against a Modern army which combined in its organization the best principles of the art of war and the most up-to-date equipment and technique.

In the circumstances, it is difficult to see how the Allies intended to fight the war on land. We know what happened in Poland. That campaign was finished perfectly logically in about three weeks, and we in the west did nothing to help Poland but awaited our turn for defeat. When it came, Germany, with 13 armoured, 7 mechanized, 3 air, and approximately 160 ordinary divisions struck the Allies, totalling some 2 armoured, 91 infantry and a few mechanized divisions at a moment when they had left the fortifications which they had been building for six months. The German armoured forces broke the Meuse Front, drove in behind the fortified belt in the north, developed the rear attack against the northern group of armies, turned south against another weekly-held and over-extended battle-front, pressed home the attack, broke through again, made another rear attack towards the Swiss frontier and that was the end. Still, it is interesting to note that, apart from the rear attack by parachutists, the Germans produced no new development beyond what was latent in the 1919 tactical idea. It is also very noteworthy that, whereas the victors of the first world war were content to relax their efforts, the nation whose armies had been completely demolished was not only foremost in building up its resources on really modern lines but made full use of the advantage of starting with a clean slate.

Before we close this lamentable chapter let a soldier say that the destruction of the land forces of the democratic powers arose



inevitably from the abiding vices of democracy, pseudo-intellectualism, parsimony and a middle-class dislike of fighting men. It was a sound instinct which put the Cenotaph in Whitehall.

### PART III

The destruction of the French Field and fortress armies and the ejection of the B.E.F. from Europe has left the Axis and Russian land forces in control of Europe and Northern Asia. It also leaves the British Commonwealth, behind its sea and air defences, free to reorganize its land forces in the light of the war's lessons for whatever operations may be in store in the future. In this we are helped by the fact that we are no longer required to conform to the tactical and strategical ideas of a continental ally. Sir W. Robertson when he hoped that "next war we'd have no bloody allies" was not far wrong.

2. The question now before the commonwealth is, "What are we going to do with our new found freedom of action bought at a price of £100,000,000 and many valuable lives?" Our first action must be to review the lessons of the war up to date and correlate the experience of Flanders, North Africa, Somaliland and East Africa to the fundamental principles of war and the new weapons and equipment which are now coming to hand. In doing so we must free our minds from all preconceived or residual tactical ideas and strive to remodel our land forces objectively firstly for the immediate tasks in hand, and secondly, for the future. In so doing we land soldiers must recognise that just as in the past, success in seaborne operations derived from sea supremacy so henceforward, on land, success in land operations will derive from air supremacy.

The first necessity is to make certain that any of our vital bases which are liable to attack are sufficiently fortified. As things stand now the bases which may be in danger are England, Malaya, Egypt and India. But the forms of attack which these may receive differ. In the case of Egypt and India it takes the form of a land attack by modern armies, but armies separated from their objectives by great distances and deserts—supported by modern air forces. England and Malaya can only be attacked from the sea and the air. Where modern forces may approach us on land we must be prepared to meet them with modern defences. These defences must be so organized that wherever the terrain does not admit of our holding a continual fortified barrier we are in a position to meet deep thrusts against our L. of C. This dictates "fortresses" in depth, a good example being Mersa Matruh

in the Libyan Desert. Furthermore in populous areas wherever rear attacks from the sea and air are likely to develop they must be met by something akin to the *levee en masse* such as the HOME-GUARD. It is nowadays essential to organize and control the non-military population within striking distance of hostile air or land armies.

We must also create modern field armies, adequately equipped against air attack and armoured assault and yet capable of developing a rear attack in combination with a frontal attack. This requires a powerful armoured mobile arm and a line of battle element well supplied with armour and supported by modern assault tanks and modern artillery. Modern artillery now includes the bomb from the air. Incidentally the greater the mobility of the field army in comparison with its adversary the less need is there for fixing the enemy frontally before delivering the rear attack. Immobile armies are fixed by their very immobility. Hence our final aim in organizing a field army for mobile action in Africa or Asia is the 100 per cent. mechanized force, air-supplied, operating in conjunction with forces landed from the sea and the air. In the course of our operations we may meet the strong places of the enemy. We must be prepared to destroy them scientifically by air and land attack without wasting our field armies in adequately supported assaults.

The mobility of our new model field armies must be adequate to their tasks. So it is permissible to guess at some of these tasks.

First, there are the important channels of communication to keep clear. Among these are: the English Channel and the Red Sea. To clear the English Channel it may be necessary to re-occupy the areas Calais—Boulogne; the Cherbourg peninsula; the Finisterre peninsula; and the Channel isles. The mobility required for this task is amphibious. Land mobility need not in the first instance be high. Forces strong in local assault power will cross on wide fronts on an agreed plan and endeavour to form connected bridgeheads. Air supremacy will be an essential preliminary to this operation. This will be the real task of the Royal Air Force; but under the cover of this air supremacy the armies will require air support for bombardment, transport of troops and supplies, evacuation of wounded, etc., the provision of this support will largely free them from the incubus of cannon and land transport.

The capture of Massawa and Assab would clear the Italians from the Red Sea coast, thereby removing any threat to our sea

traffic between the forces in India and Egypt and releasing our warships for other duties. This again is an amphibious operation requiring sea and air supremacy and air support to the landed force. This amphibious operation on the Red Sea coast is not, however, the main task of the Eastern group of armies: our armies in North Africa, Western Asia and India. Until the Eastern armies are ripe for the grand counter-offensives it is necessary to defend a strategical front stretching from Kashmir to the Western Desert of Egypt and the Ethiopian Frontiers of the Sudan.

Now the characteristics of this vast front are surprisingly uniform. From Quetta westwards there are thousands of miles of desert lands rarely broken by fertile river valleys or highlands. From the south the sea thrusts two great arms into this block—the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. To the north-west is the Mediterranean. Railways and roads are few. The land is barren and waterless. The characteristics of this very extensive theatre dictate the characteristics which modern armies should have for operations within its borders. Field Armies operating anywhere from North Africa to India must be fully mechanized and must be supported and supplied by air. But given mechanization, armour and air supply such armies will bring back to land warfare the technique of Ghengis Khan's army, which combined the line of battle, the artillery and the rear assault in an army of one mobility.

The main elements of modern armies will therefore be Armoured Divisions, Mechanized Infantry Formations, Army Air Forces and the Maintenance Element.

Anywhere in the Middle East such an army would become even more decisive if certain specially organized and equipped divisions of infantry were available when required to develop the rear attack from the sea, which in these areas is so conveniently placed for us. The final requirement for our modern army is one or more airborne divisions which can initially be modelled on the German or Russian formations but should eventually be modified for the special circumstances of eastern warfare.

The new model Eastern army we require should have defensive forces to hold areas in which it is not intended to operate offensively and also our main bases. In some places this defence will be mobile, in others fortifications will be possible. Our main defensive areas are Malaya, the Western Frontier of India and Palestine. Our offensive areas will in time become the Red Sea and the Sudan, the North African littoral, the coasts of south-east Europe and possibly the Balkans.

Now for the counter-offensive.

Assuming that our fortresses, seaways and land corridors are secure—what then? Consider the Germans' position; a large and efficient land army, a weak ally sitting on a peninsula in a sea in which he is not predominant, a doubtful Balkan situation and a more doubtful Russia. Hitler is much in the position of Napoleon from 1808 to 1812; with much the same need to obtain a quick and final decision. Our business is to refuse him that decision and to stretch him to the limit of his resources. In Napoleon's day we chose Spain for a "stretcher." To-day we have the choice of the Balkans, South Italy, the Mediterranean islands and Libya. We may even eventually have Spain. We have also for the matter of that Norway and the French coast. Everywhere the sea lies between us and our enemy; we must make its shores an area of ever-present menace.

So the next task of our field forces is to become amphibious. We should, I feel, organize and train, everywhere for combined operations and let the enemy know it too. The army has got to grow webfooted. But before we can develop an amphibious strategy in the Mediterranean it looks as if we ought to remove Libya from Italy. If so, that involves a desert campaign mainly of armoured divisions supported and sustained by aircraft and backed by motorized troops to hold the bases in rear. Given a properly organized army, say four Armoured Divisions and four Motor Divisions, the task should not be insuperable. And having involved Italians and Germans in that campaign for which they are, I feel, ill-equipped, the moment may come for the attack on South Italy. But since for some time to come initiative on land rests with the enemy, the trouble is to foretell from where the counter-attack on land will start. It may even start from Iraq, Southern Arabia or Central Africa.

Without venturing too deeply into conjecture we can, I think, see the broad lines of our return match taking shape into two main armies, west and east, both amphibious. The west to operate on the Atlantic coasts. The east to secure the Middle East, clear the North African coast and gradually mop up the northern Mediterranean coast until the Balkans, Italy and Spain detach themselves from Germany. For this we land fighters will need modern fortress-holders, a modern field army and perhaps modern siege troops. We may need all of the 4,000 tanks ordered from America and all that we can make ourselves. We will need our wings, something approximately to an army air arm, at least

an air detachment, to serve the land battle, bomb where we need bombs, parachute where we need parachutists, transport where we need to be transported. We soldiers must be prepared to help in the evolution of that arm. We must get forward with our own evolution towards speed and mobility on land and at sea. The marching soldier is an anachronism in open warfare in the vast distances of the Near East and North Africa.

We have got the cause, the time, the men, the money and a clear-cut target. We have world industry behind us. There is nothing in the world to stop us winning the third round in land warfare except the relics of that ignorance, timidity and financial turpitude which has cost us so dear in the last twenty years. And in organizing the army of the Eastern comeback, India must take the major part.



## AN INTERLUDE IN THE CAMPAIGN IN NORWAY

BY AN INDIAN ARMY OFFICER

There must have been few, if any, officers in the Indian Army a year ago who ever dreamed that they would have a chance of seeing active service in a country so remote as Norway. Yet towards the end of April, 1940, twenty of them received orders to report in Lahore immediately and, from there, to proceed to the United Kingdom by air. They were to "act as advisors to Officers Commanding battalions which might be required to operate in mountainous country." These officers assembled in Lahore on the 22nd April, and from the fact that a large proportion of them were carrying fishing rods it was apparent that they were men of acute deductive ability!

Lahore brought an issue of gas-masks and a lecture from an officer of Army Headquarters. At Karachi they embarked in a new Imperial Airways flying-boat designed to carry seventeen passengers. Three extra seats had been installed in the luggage compartment aft; this was noisy, smelly and dark, and was soon given the name of "Black Hole of Cathay." "Cathay" was the aeroplane. It was changed for the "Champion" at Alexandria, and in this aeroplane the journey to London was completed.

The morning after arrival the twenty officers met General Massy and Brigadier Bruce who described the situation as it then was and explained the future intentions. The British forces had been evacuated from Namsos and Andalsnes, but operations for the occupation of Narvik were still continuing. The importance of Narvik is well known as an iron-ore port, though its future in German hands may disclose other uses for it. It was realised that the Germans would almost certainly continue their advance northwards, and it was the intention to harass their lines of communication by the adoption of guerilla tactics. For this purpose special independent companies had been formed, and five of them were ready for service. They were under the command of a colonel with a staff approximating to that of a brigade. Each company was about 300 strong, all volunteers from different divisions. With the exception of some officers all were Territorials. The company included sappers, signals and interpreters as well as infantry; it also had a support section of four Bren guns. It was

divided into three platoons of three sections, each of the latter commanded by an officer.

In addition to the normal articles of clothing and equipment the men were issued with Alpine ruck-sacks, snow-shoes, arctic boots, leather jerkins and sheepskin coats. The ruck-sacks proved to be extremely useful, but as no one knew how to use the snow-shoes and there was insufficient transport for the sheepskin coats these were soon abandoned. A reserve of 30 days' rations and a special five-day mountain ration of pemmican, together with a S.A.A. reserve of 100,000 rounds were also included in each company. The final gift towards independence was a large sum of English and Norwegian currency, which was to buy local supplies, and particularly to hire local transport.

The stated intention to use the Indian Army officers as advisors to battalion commanders was out of the question, as there were by this time few battalions left in Norway. They were used as attached officers to the independent companies. Eight were ordered to stand-by at twenty-four hours' notice; the remainder were given one week's leave. Since only eighty pounds of kit had been allowed on the journey Home, the eight spent two busy days buying essential uniform and equipment, and enjoyed the novel experience of sending the bills to the India Office for payment. Had one stopped any of them in the street and asked him what he was doing, he would have replied: "What I've wanted to do for fifteen years."

On May 1st, they received their summons to report on the following day. Here they met the commander of the Independent Companies and left with him the next evening, arriving on the Clyde the following morning. They found two ships from the Liverpool-to-Belfast run, which were to take them to Norway. They were comfortable enough, and to a schoolboy would have been heaven, because they had been requisitioned at such short notice that no refitting had been done; in consequence after a day or two water became so scarce that all washing was forbidden. No. 3 Company was in one ship, and Nos. 4 and 5 in the other. They sailed with an escort of four destroyers. The plan was for No. 3 Company to go straight to Bodo and secure that area, whilst Nos. 4 and 5 Companies landed further south at Mosjoen and establish contact with the Germans. Bodo was important as the chief port in that part of Norway, the seat of the local government and the headquarters of the Broadcasting Company. It was also hoped to find ground in the vicinity suitable for the

construction of a landing-ground. It was realised that until a landing-ground was made our force could have no air support, as the area of operations was beyond the range of fighter aircraft based at Harstadt.

The voyage was uneventful, and was spent in overhauling kits and studying maps of Norway. There was a constant stream of conflicting reports from London which could not be queried because wireless silence had been ordered. It was apparent that there were no British forces between the southern landing places and the Germans, so Nos. 4 and 5 Companies made plans for an opposed landing.

It is necessary here to consider the country. Norway is a delightful place in which to spend one's leave, but it is a nightmare for the conventional soldier who uses F.S.R. as a background to his daytime thoughts. The coastline is covered by literally thousands of islands, and is broken by deep fjords which run miles inland; into these the mountains drop precipitously. Between Mosjoen and Bodo there is one main valley along which runs a metalled road, passable by motor transport once the snow has melted. This road crosses a high snow-field on the line of the Arctic Circle, which is between Mo and Bodo, and further north it crosses a fjord by a ferry. At Bodo it stops. The broad gauge railway from the south ends at Namsos.

When the venture began the hills were covered by snow, but it had all melted by the beginning of June. It was bitterly cold and damp at first but became delightful later, and before the end of the operations the Norwegians were sunbathing in the open. They are a remarkably fit-looking people, though they actually suffer from a high incidence of tuberculosis, due to the necessity of keeping their cattle indoors during the winter months. They are simple and kindly folk, who refused our soldiers no help, but the prevalence of Fifth Columnists among them made these very traits dangerous and deceptive. In May and June there is no darkness; one can read a book indoors at any hour of the twenty-four, and this fact prevented relief from enemy air observation and attack, and introduced a new problem into withdrawals.

To resume the story of the operations: Nos. 4 and 5 Companies landed at Mosjoen shortly after midnight on the night of 8/9th May. It was snowing at the time, which kept off German aircraft. A party of Chasseurs Alpines, about a hundred strong, who had been guarding Mosjoen, met the Companies and explained the situation. The Germans were advancing rapidly



and were only a few miles to the South. It was decided to send No. 5 Company southwards to support the Norwegians who were still resisting the Germans, and to leave No. 4 Company to defend Mosjoen. The Chasseurs Alpines embarked on the ship which had brought the Companies and departed northwards.

The next day reports were received that a German troopship was steaming northwards from the south of Mosjoen. The Navy were not prepared to work on unconfirmed reports—there were too many of them—and so the Germans were able to effect their famous landing at Hemnes, opposed by only one platoon of No. 1 Independent Company. The troopship was sunk by destroyers, but only after it had succeeded in landing its force behind our troops. There was no alternative to a re-embarkation and withdrawal by sea. The commander of the Independent Companies used almost every known means of travel in passing the orders for this withdrawal round his command; he moved unceasingly by car, by bicycle, walking and even swimming in order to reach all detachments. Before the companies left, the Germans were made to pay the price of speed. It was their practice to send cyclists ahead of their advanced guards; one Indian Army officer, remembering the Pathan, laid an ambush on the road, into which these cyclists fell. All sixty of them were killed—the first burst of fire killed many and the rest, shouting "Heil Hitler!" rode jinking through the dead to their own destruction. They were admired by our men and buried by their own. A small ship was found which was intended to carry 150 men; on this 600 of our troops embarked and left safely. A small number of men were left behind; they were guards over dumps with whom it was not possible to establish contact. They arrived in Bodo fourteen days later, having marched over the mountains after destroying the dumps they had guarded. Their arms and equipment were complete.

Meanwhile No. 3 Company had landed unopposed at Bodo, where they were met by a detachment of regular British infantry from Harstadt and two dejected-looking Royal Air Force officers. The cause of their sorrow was soon told. They had arrived two days before in two flying-boats to reconnoitre suitable landing-grounds and begin construction. The flying-boats had not been at anchor in the harbour for more than a few hours when a German aeroplane, the first that had been seen in that part, arrived and sank one of them with a bomb. The other was then towed up a small creek and carefully hidden. The next day

the German aeroplane returned, made straight for the place where the flying-boat was hidden and destroyed it. This efficient spy service was not the least of our enemies. The event hastened the disembarkation of No. 3 Company; they had no desire to remain in such a well-informed neighbourhood longer than was necessary. They went into peaceful billets in a hamlet at the head of the fjord. These days of peace were made more delightful by a rapid improvement in the weather, the country shed its snow and became strikingly beautiful. The only signs of war were constant rumours of enemy landings from parachutes, boats and seaplanes, and a regular air traffic northwards to Narvik. The Germans were reinforcing their beleaguered garrison with supplies.

By the middle of May Nos. 3, 4 and 5 Companies were holding positions round the edge of the Bodo fjord as far south as Rognan; No. 2 Company had arrived and was holding the Bodo area. No. 1 Company, which had arrived before any of the others, was holding Mo and was in contact with the Germans. It was now apparent that the Germans intended to push northwards as fast as they could; accordingly a brigade of regulars was ordered down from Harstadt to reinforce the area. One battalion of this Brigade went south to join No. 1 Company at Mo; the remainder were to stay in the Bodo area. The laborious task of making a landing ground at Bodo was begun; the ground was so soft that it needed almost complete resurfacing, and even wooden house doors were used in making the runway. At this time things began to go wrong. The remainder of the brigade, which was due for Bodo, met with two disasters. The first battalion was in a transport when the Germans attacked with aircraft and inflicted material loss on it. It was decided to send the other battalion with more precautions, but it too met with misfortune and had to be sent back to Harstadt to refit. The delay in its final arrival at Bodo was a very serious factor in the course of the campaign.

The expected German advance from Mo developed, and the first regular battalion and No. 1 Company were forced to give ground. The hills along this route are covered with thick pine forests in which visibility is often only ten or twenty yards. When the Germans met opposition on the line of the road, they were quick to deploy out on to the hills on either flank. In these flanking moves they were helped by the knowledge of the country which many of their officers had gained as "tourists" in peacetime;

they were also helped by good modern maps and, of course, by their complete mastery in the air. Nevertheless they owed their success to other causes of more general application. Their men were very fit and hard, and were used according to their special aptitudes—those that were accustomed to hills and to snow were used widest on the flanks and so on; they do not delude themselves that all infantry are equal, or even that all men given equal training will make the same type of infantrymen. Their men were specially armed for forest and hill fighting; in place of heavy automatics (and a Bren is very heavy half-way up a steep hill!) they had machine-carbines; in place of artillery they had grenades and numerous mortars. Our men were outwalked, outweaponed, outnumbered and finally outflanked.

No. 3 Company was sent south to relieve No. 1 Company, as the latter had suffered heavily in three weeks of continuous fighting. The relief took place at Krokstandt, some thirty miles north of Mo. The second regular battalion to arrive was sent south to take up a position at Pothus. Whilst preparing the position they discovered a dump of German ammunition, which is rather a surprising find in an allied country as yet unoccupied by the enemy. Our "Q" staff are taught to think ahead—perhaps they now need post-graduate training!

The first regular battalion withdrew slowly through the Pothus position and were then sent back to Bodo to rest. No. 3 Company remained with the other Battalion and No. 2 Company who were already at Pothus. Up till this time it was expected that further reinforcements would come to drive the Germans south. It was now known that they would not come. However, the day that the Pothus position was abandoned was the first of two red-letter days for the British. Three gladiator fighters had landed on the newly-made landing ground at Bodo and now appeared in the air. One unfortunately crashed when taking off, but the other two put up a typically marvellous R.A.F. performance. One or the other was kept continuously in the air over Rognan, where a tricky withdrawal into ferry-boats was in progress. They played ducks and drakes with the Germans, and in their two days of glorious action accounted for more than fifteen German planes. The effect on the troops was electric, they cheered at the sight of them and became different men; but it was not to last. A large force of Messerschmidts-110 arrived, shot one down and the other had to leave for Narvik; the pilot was badly wounded in the plane that was shot down. Just before this action the Germans dropped

leaflets on Bodo which read: "Thank you for building the landing-ground. We will not bomb it, we will take it." A sinister quip, and not quite true, for shortly afterwards about a hundred German bombers arrived and razed Bodo to the ground. High explosive and incendiary bombs spared nothing except, of course, the brewery; even the hospital, clearly marked with red-crosses and standing apart from the town, was reduced to ashes. The town consisted largely of wooden houses, and this fact may have been a blessing, for the smoke that they gave off as they burnt covered the inhabitants and garrison as they evacuated the place.

The withdrawal by ferry from Rognan to Landset was successful but with nothing to spare. The last boatload embarked as the Germans entered Rognan village, a sapper lit the fuze which was to blow up the jetty and—the engine of the boat stopped! The engineer who tinkered with the engine had considerable moral support from his passengers in his desire for success, and he achieved it in time for the boat to be some fifty yards from the jetty when it went up. The explosion knocked all the troops over on to the deck, but none was hurt. It was hoped that the destruction of the jetty and removal of all boats would place an effective barrier in the way of further German advance. They had an arm of the sea between them and our forces. They attacked the next day. They had found a bridle path round the head of the fjord, and with amazing energy and determination they had marched all night and were on our tail again, not, however, in any strength.

Complete evacuation had been ordered, but with Bodo destroyed and German forces still in contact with our rear parties it looked to be a ticklish operation. In the event it was entirely successful, largely because the Germans suspended air action for the three vital days. The first echelons had left by cruiser and were taken to a lonely camp in North Britain to prevent all communication with outside; it was essential that the evacuation should be kept absolutely secret from the start. The last echelons left on destroyers, and went in the first instance to Harstadt. Harstadt was evacuated a few days later, and the operation was marked by an event which deserves credit. The Air Force pilots of the Hurricane Fighters which were there were ordered to destroy their machines. This they were so loth to do that they asked permission to fly them on to an Aircraft Carrier. Permission was given, though the feat was extremely dangerous, as a Hurricane

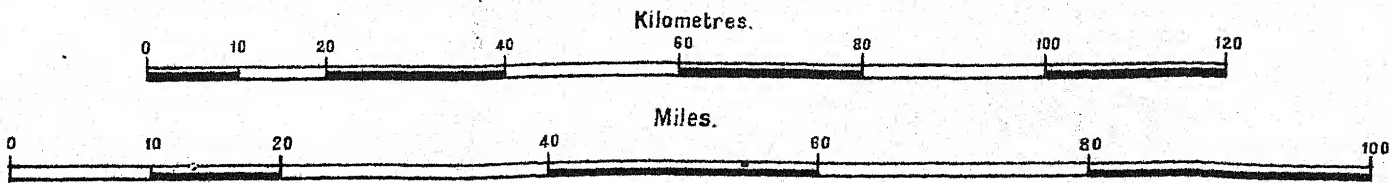
was never designed to land on anything but a large landing-ground. They all succeeded.

So ended an adventure which has many counterparts in previous and subsequent British military history. If our civilians are a race of shopkeepers, our soldiers are a race of plumbers—they come, and then go back for their tools. It was, however, the first campaign which proved certain fundamentals of this war: One cannot fight without air equality, one shouldn't without air superiority. The battlefield is no place for any man who has not been trained to take a pride in his endurance, his hardness and his independence of all comfort. Infantry is no longer a generic term for an armed soldier who has no horse, nor can infantry be armed and trained to fight successfully everywhere. The German infantry, who needed machine-carbines, had them; those who had snow-shoes could use them, they were specialists in Norwegian warfare, not just "P.B.I." These basic facts are well understood at home and no one on the Continent need doubt that when we come back we shall have our tools with us.

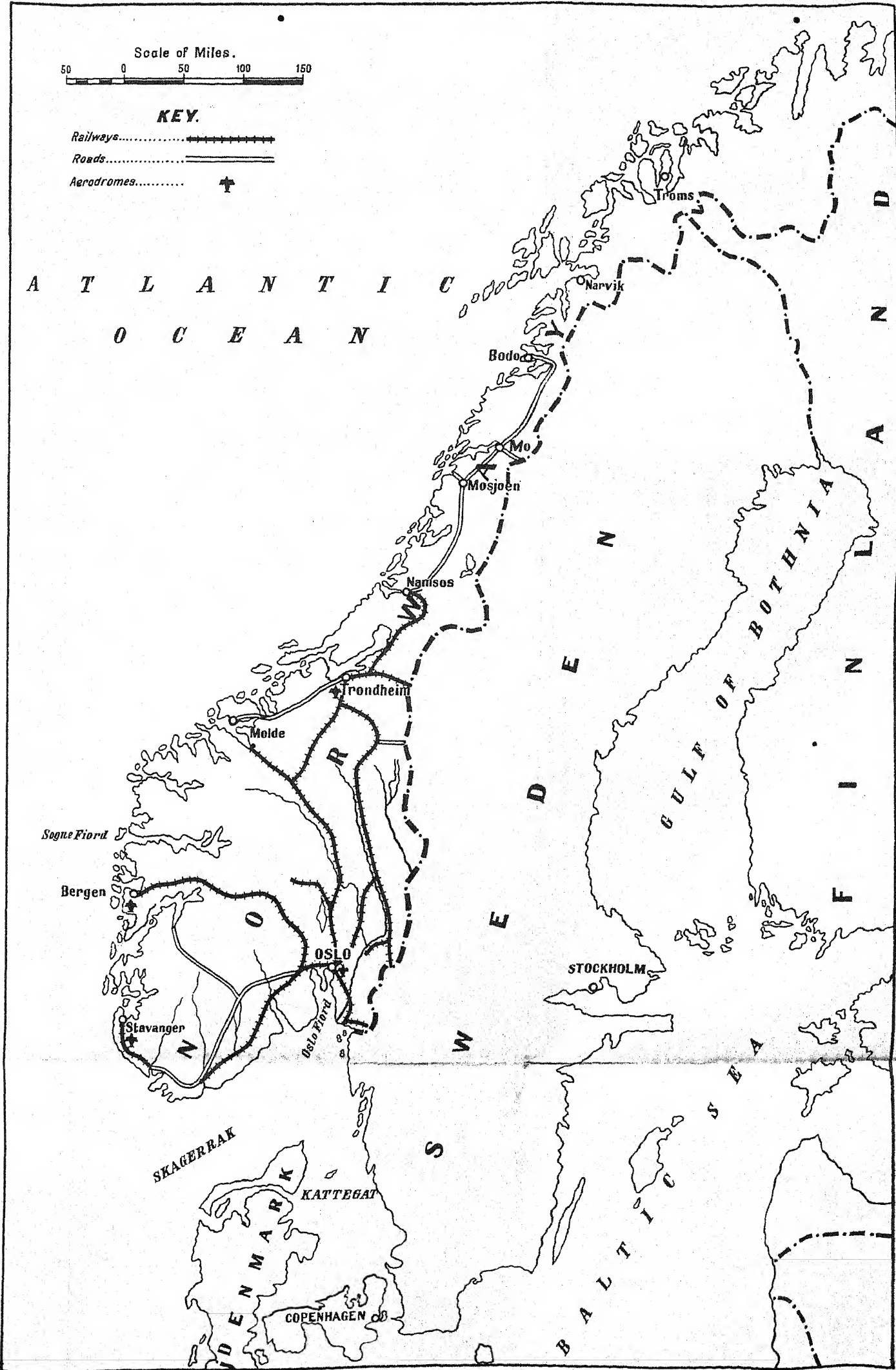




AREA OF OPERATIONS FORCE MOBO N.W.E.F.



THE SCANDINAVIAN CAMPAIGN.





## LEARNING GREEK

BY "KARSHISH"

I am told on reliable authority that the number of Army officers who "did" Greek at school is extremely small and that the number who have any respect for or want to know more about Greek is even smaller. So I hasten to inform my readers that I am going to write principally about Modern Greek or Romaic, and also that I once heard quite an interesting lecture on "The Theory of Rifle Fire."

Greece has now been forced by Italy to enter the war and her political and military significance will probably loom large during the next few months. This is my excuse for producing a few scattered reminiscences about a language and people of which not very much is generally known.

Modern Greek is both surprisingly like and surprisingly different from classical or even Hellenistic Greek. The written language (*ἡ καθαρεύουσα γλῶσσα*) seems very familiar to the scholar of classical Greek, while the spoken tongue is completely unintelligible to him on account of its pronunciation, its vocabulary and its construction.

Although the language of the Athenian newspapers bears such a close resemblance to the Greek of Thucydides it is nevertheless a mistake to think that the written language has passed down the ages practically unchanged. In actual fact, at the time of the Greek War of Independence in 1820, written Greek was really a dead language and its resurrection was artificial, the result of a national revival largely brought about by the efforts of Adamantios Korais. The spoken vernacular, however, has been evolved from the Attic Greek by a natural and regular process and is spoken universally. What Korais did was to fabricate a written language where none existed and instead of producing a polished version of the spoken dialects, a virtually impossible feat, he went back to classical Greek, either reintroducing ancient literary words or coining new ones according to a fixed principle. Later tendencies in Greek literature have deplored the fact that the modern written language is artificial and thus unrepresentative of modern thought. Most modern novelists and poets prefer to write in the *ἡ καθομιλουμένη γλῶσσα* or popular tongue. The formal language of korais, however, still persists in the press, in official language



and in serious literature. It is remarkable for the fact that a foreign word is very rarely found in it. All the Greek world calls a bootblack "λοῦστρο," but to the Greek newspaper he is "ὑποδηματοκαθαριστής." In English, an egg is an egg no matter how erudite the writer. In Greek everyone says "ἄνγò," but the newspaper and the restaurant-keeper write "ῶν." In spite of these curious anomalies, perhaps even because of them, I have always found that the Greeks have an ardent respect and love for their language. A single word of Romaic addressed to a waiter in a Port Said café will usually produce a cheerful torrent of demotic Greek interlarded with Turkish, Italian and even Albanian words. I well remember an occasion when I was benighted on the road between Firuzkuh and Teheran in North Iran. We stopped the car at a small hut built where some road repairs were in progress. An elderly man emerged and spoke to us in fluent but obviously foreign Persian. I was tired out, but not too tired to ask him his nationality. He was a Greek and my "περίεργον πρῶγμα!" opened the flood gates. We sat up half the night while I laboriously dug up the relics of my knowledge of Greek acquired so assiduously six years before. We both knew Persian far better than I knew Greek but it was impossible to persuade him to speak anything but his own language.

It was with an open mind and in complete ignorance that I sailed up the Aegean Sea in June, 1919, and went ashore at Salonika. The town was in an extraordinary state of turmoil and excitement and, while our ship lay in the harbour, the Versailles Treaty was signed. Once ashore, almost the first thing I did was to buy a Greek grammar. It was a French book and the declensions and paradigms seemed to bear a striking and not wholly agreeable resemblance to my Sixth Form Greek of only five years before. I soon found, however, that this book, like many other so-called Grammars of Modern Greek, dealt with the stilted written language only and that it was practically useless for speaking purposes.

During my short stay in Salonika I hardly got beyond using the numerals and a few odd words, though I soon began to read the newspapers with ease. Within a few weeks I was installed at Chanak Kale and began to take lessons from a Greek interpreter. I at once found myself up against a grave difficulty. Socratis, like most poorly educated men, had a positive veneration for long words and pompous phraseology. He himself was a Thracian and could use the καθομιλουμένη with picturesque and

telling fluency. He positively declined, however, to teach me anything but the literary language with the result that I made little practical progress.

In the autumn of 1919, the depot with which I was serving was transferred to Bostanjik, a few miles along the railway from Haidar Pasha, the Istanbul terminus of the "Berlin—Bagdad" Railway. Here there were plenty of Greeks to talk to and there were frequent opportunities for visiting the capital and particularly Pera which, at that time, was largely populated by Greeks. Many people are apt to forget the essential Hellenism of the old Byzantium. The very names ISTANBUL and PERA are of Greek origin. The Greeks have always called Constantinople simply *ἡ πόλις* "the city." When the settlement of Pera was established on the East of the Golden Horn, they would speak of going over "to the city," *εἰς τὴν πόλιν* or in the spoken dialect *στην πόλι*. This was pronounced "stimboli" for "π" after "ν" is always pronounced as "b." The Greeks remaining in Istanbul, on the other hand, spoke of going *ἐκεῖ πέρα*, or "over to the other side." The Turks changed "stimboli" into ISTAMBUL (now written Istanbul). Pera, however, they have always called "Beyoglu."

Work at the Indian Base Depot was spasmodic and my visits to Pera were frequent and often lasted over the week-end. Although I was learning Turkish at the same time, I always insisted on speaking Greek in Pera and began to make rapid progress. I obtained a good deal of useful practice at Bertha's Bar and I must digress for a moment to say a few words about Bertha. She had, I understand, first come to the Balkans before the War with a troupe of dancing girls called the "Eight Lancashire Lassies" (she herself came from Blackpool). This troupe rapidly dispersed and, at the outbreak of the War, Bertha was doing a song-and-dance turn at the Petits Champs open-air cabaret in Pera. At her last performance before leaving Turkey for Greece she astonished her audience by accompanying her final bow with a fine display of Union Jack which she had concealed in her capacious bosom. After spending some time in Athens, Bertha went to Salonika where she opened Bertha's Bar. Although fantastically generous and highly unbusinesslike, she managed to make a good deal of money out of this enterprising venture and set up in Pera shortly after the Armistice. Her first establishment in Shishli was a grand affair with a lovely garden and a gambling hell which she refused to allow British officers to enter. In the winter of 1919, she had a fine bar off the Grande

Rue de Pera. Her easy-going ways, her generosity and her habit of allowing people to sign for drinks soon got her into difficulties and she began to move into more and more modest premises. But the drink was always good, the prices moderate and Bertha always cheerful. I never knew her age or her surname, but she was a good friend of mine. When business was slack she loved to sit down and talk and I never met anyone who understood Balkan peoples and problems better than she did. Through sheer necessity she had acquired an excellent knowledge of French and Greek and was always interested in my linguistic studies. After the evacuation, a very famous regiment, faithful to a long-standing promise, paid her way to London by the Orient Express and entertained her most magnificently at Frascati. I was honoured by an invitation, but unfortunately was unable to accept it. I never heard what ultimately became of Bertha. She was a genuine patriot and a most generous-hearted woman.

I had few dealings with the Hellenic Greeks until at the end of 1920 I was sent to Smyrna as Assistant Liaison Officer to the Greek forces there. Occasionally, I was employed as interpreter between British and Greek staff officers at places on the Bosphorus where Greek troops were stationed, and once managed to prevent an imminent quarrel between an irate Greek colonel and an exasperated British officer by pointing out that they both possessed a remarkable medal presented by the Panama Republic. Inspired by this unusual bond of union, they both quickly composed their differences.

At the end of 1920, the political and military situation in Turkey was deplorable. The sponsoring of the Greek occupation of the Aidin vilayet by the British Government had already shown itself to be an almost irrevocable mistake. It was a striking example of a phenomenon which is happily of infrequent occurrence in the conduct of British foreign policy: the handling of problems by politicians as totally ignorant of their nature as of the history and character of the peoples involved. Lloyd George's plan of backing the Greek occupation of Anatolia, and later of Thrace, had in theory much to recommend it. On the one hand, it freed the Allied armed forces from the task of policing a disorganized Turkey up to the Russian Frontier, and on the other it would eventually provide a much-needed buffer between a potentially menacing Soviet state and the Eastern Mediterranean. Indeed, had the Greek forces been allowed to overrun Anatolia before Turkish resistance was organized, part or

all of Lloyd George's plan might have materialized. The number of factors which the Prime Minister, acting largely without the advice of experts, appears to have ignored was startling. He had failed to take into account the French and Italian attitude, the resistance of the Turks, British and Indian Moslem public opinion and last, but by no means least, the political instability of the Greeks themselves. Anyone who knew the history of the Greek minorities in Anatolia could have foretold that the landing of a Greek force in Smyrna would involve a massacre. The only point which was uncertain was how widespread the massacre would be. Actually it was a small, almost a gentlemanly massacre, but the whole "civilized" world threw up its hands in pious horror and the Greek force, which was supposed to advance quickly to the Marmora and the Black Sea, was ordered by the Allies not to advance at all. In June, 1920, alarmed at reports of Turkish reorganization, the Supreme Council, or rather the British Government, ordered, or, at any rate, encouraged, the Greeks to advance again. This they promptly did and executed a series of brilliant operations which clearly demonstrated the efficiency of the Greek General Staff and the stamina and morale of the troops.

When I was ordered to Smyrna in October, 1920, I had not examined the military or political situation in any detail. Generally speaking, British army officers sympathised with the Turks rather than the Greeks. Members of the Anglo-Levantine colony also favoured the Turks but for different reasons. They liked the Turk largely because he was easy-going and unbusinesslike. They did not want to see him supplanted by the Greek who had an unpleasant reputation for commercial acumen. Personally, I took a line which has more than once called forth the wrath of my seniors and the pitying contempt of my more successful contemporaries. I formed my own opinion, which was that the Greeks were Christians and much more civilized than the Turks and therefore superior to them. Later, I was obliged to modify this opinion, but by holding it in the first place, I was able to sympathize with and understand the Greeks better than many others.

I went from Istanbul to Smyrna in a North Sea trawler with a Greek captain and crew. The weather was very bad and the voyage took four days instead of twenty-four hours. I know little of the sea, but I was impressed by that captain. He had no chart and cared nothing for the compass, but being a Greek islander



he seemed to be completely familiar with every island and every foot of the coast. Time after time, when the seas became more than the ship could stand, he would slip between formidable and jagged rocks into comparatively calm water. He was only twenty-five and was obviously enjoying himself tremendously.

I arrived in Smyrna to find the British Military Mission under General Tom Bridges packing up to leave. They were to be replaced by M. A. B. Johnston, author of "450 Miles to Freedom," as Liaison Officer, myself as Assistant Liaison and Intelligence Officer and Paddy Coghill (now Colonel Sir Patrick) as Cipher Officer. Our work was by no means easy. The work of Liaison was complicated by the uncertainty of Allied policy and by the reproaches of the Greeks who saw clearly that the longer they were held in leash, the greater would become the resisting power of the Turks. They also knew that the morale of the army was being steadily undermined by inactivity. The work of Intelligence was rendered difficult primarily by the fact that those controlling it, though probably able Staff Officers, were without experience of the peoples with whom they were dealing and were largely ignorant of their problems and languages. They were frequently influenced by Anglo-Levantine residents and by business adventurers whose motives were not always disinterested.

After I had appreciated the situation in Smyrna, I strongly recommended that I should be allowed to co-operate with the Greeks in the matter of intelligence. This was not approved with the result that I was only able to achieve very little. But life in Smyrna was full of interest and amusement. On the departure of the Military Mission, we moved to a place called Boudja, about six miles from Smyrna. Here we took a beautiful English house with a magnificent garden. We lived in very great comfort, going into Smyrna every day and entertaining a number of Greek officers and their wives and other foreigners. We were most hospitably received by the local British residents, most of whom had large families including some remarkably pretty and attractive daughters. Most of them had been expensively educated in Europe, but their complexions and their natures remained "full of the warm South." Our circle of acquaintance was very large and we were usually visited by any travellers who touched at the port. I remember returning from Istanbul one evening and on driving up to the house, being surprised to see it brilliantly lit up and to hear extremely festive sounds issuing from it. On entering, I found not less than fifteen young and attractive girls of



varying nationalities being entertained by Johnny and Paddy. They were members of a theatrical touring company called "Autour du Monde" which had just arrived. Most of the girls were English and a pluckier and more cheerful collection I have seldom met. Their situation was unenviable for, having had a considerable success in Pera, the manager and leading lady had gone off to Paris to make whoopee with the proceeds. In Smyrna their show, though far from bad, was a complete frost and they were soon without any funds. We helped them as much as we could and so did a number of Greek officers, Turks and others. The small crowd which saw them off, when they left travelling steerage in a Greek cargo steamer, was one of the most mixed I have ever seen.

My frequent visits to Greek Headquarters and my social relations with Greek officers enabled me greatly to improve my Greek and also to learn much of the character of the Greeks and something of their army. I found that the Hellenic Greeks spoke much better and clearer Greek than their Anatolian cousins, though, from a racial point of view, the latter were the more authentic descendants of the ancient Greek people. A very large proportion of the Anatolian Greeks spoke no language but Turkish though the Greek nationalist movement had greatly encouraged them to learn Greek. I should say myself that the outstanding characteristics of the Greeks were intense patriotism, excitability, sense of humour and a marked tendency to be hypercritical and hyperpolitical. Greek patriotism is something akin to the racial cohesion of the Jews; it is based on the fervid admiration of the achievements of their forbears. It moves them to great sacrifices of which I may quote the example of a friend of mine who was the son of a wealthy Greek domiciled in Egypt. He himself was British-born and had been educated in England, being a scholar of Eton and Balliol. On the outbreak of the War in 1914, he renounced his British nationality and joined the Greek army as a private soldier. He scarcely knew Greek and outwardly he was an Englishman, but his spirit was essentially Greek.

The social outlook of the Greeks is extremely democratic. I remember a Greek General telling me with pride how he had once had occasion to visit a Staff Officer in order to impress upon him a certain point of view. When he had left the room, the sentry on the door, who had obviously been listening intently, sprang to attention and said to him: *Στρατηγέ μου, δὲν συμφώνω με τὴν δέα σὰς*, "General, I disagree with your point of view." Of the excitability

of the Greeks we had abundant evidence at the return of King Constantine to Athens at the end of 1920. The whole population and the considerable garrison were in a high state of tension. The King was believed to be coming to Smyrna and the cry everywhere was "έρχεται" "he is coming." This developed into three taps made on any hard object. The cafés resounded with these taps and the streets with Royalist songs which quickly ousted the panegyrics of Venizelos. I still remember one:

Με τέτοιο Κωνσταντίνο, με τέτοιο βασιλέα'

Θα πάρουμε τὴν πόλιν καὶ Ἁγία Σοφία'

"With such a Constantine, with such a king, we will take Constantinople and St. Sophia with it."

One evening Paddy and I came into the town for a supper party we were giving at one of the hotels. We had brought some of our own champagne with us and in handing this out of the car dropped a bottle on the cobblestones. It went off with a loud explosion and we were immediately surrounded by a considerable crowd. Those in the immediate vicinity saw at once what had caused the noise and were duly amused, but those behind shouted and pressed forward in an alarming manner until the voluble explanations of the others had convinced them.

As a fighting machine, the Greek army gave a very good account of itself until its efficiency was undermined by political dissension. Commanders and staff were good up to the return of Constantine, but no army could have stood the wholesale changes which then ensued. Some of the Royalist officers were undoubtedly able men but the C.-in-C.—General Paraskevopoulos, his C.G.S.—General Saryannis and his D.Q.M.G.—Colonel Botsaris, were not suitably replaced. The rank and file were excellent and a match for the Turks in courage, endurance and morale. As often happens among intensely democratic armies, the regimental officers were weak, caring very little for the welfare of the men. I was not in Smyrna when the final disaster took place, but observed it from the Olympian heights of Allied Headquarters in Constantinople. The expulsion of the Greek army from Anatolia was lauded to the skies as a brilliant military operation on the part of the Turks. Undoubtedly the action was conducted with skill and courage but it must be remembered that the Greek army was disheartened by the political bungling at home and by the vacillating policy of the Allies and rendered less efficient by the changes in commands and staffs. Before the Turks delivered their decisive stroke, there were rumours that the

king intended to cut his losses and withdraw the Greek forces from Asia Minor. Few armies will fight to defend territory when they believe their government is ready to surrender that territory without a struggle.

After the decisive defeat of the Greek army and the final miscarriage of Allied policy vis-à-vis Turkey and Greece it became obvious that the only solution to the minorities problem was to be found in an exchange of populations. Such an expedient proved a ruthless but none-the-less effective cathartic. To uproot thousands of innocent peoples from their homes and transplant them to a far country, there to gain a living by methods of which they had never even heard before, sounds unlikely to succeed. Indeed, the current generation involved in such an upheaval is not likely to settle down at all comfortably. Succeeding generations of Anatolian Greeks and Thracian Turks, however, have a far brighter future than if they had stayed in their own homes. An example of the eventual benefits of transplantation can be found in the Armenian Colony at Julfa near Isfahan. The ancestors of this now thriving settlement hailed originally from the Southern Caucasus, once part of the Persian Empire. Despairing of settling their interminable quarrels with the Tartars, Shah Abbas, in the 16th century, ordered the entire community, numbering many thousands of families, to be forcibly driven to a place 800 miles from their homes. Thousands died on the way but the present colony represents one of the most prosperous communities in Iran.

Actually, the Turks of Thrace suffered more than the Greeks in most cases. The Greeks at Panderma had lived by fishing and the growing of cherries. These Greeks who, before their departure, not unnaturally destroyed all their boats, were replaced by Turks from Thrace who had never even seen the sea and knew nothing of fruit-growing. Perished with cold during the first winter, they cut down all the cherry-trees for fuel. I have avoided all mention of the tense situation at Chanak Kale and Ismidt during 1922 as it has no bearing on the Greek situation. The Greek threat in Constantinople was averted by diplomatic means and the Greek people finally laid aside the *μεγάλη ἰδέα* and began to tackle the enormous problem of putting together the broken pieces of their nation. The Greek people decided that six men, among whom were Gounaris and General Hadjianesti, were responsible for the catastrophe and they were accordingly executed. The British Government regarded this as an "act of

barbarism" and broke off diplomatic relations with Greece—a gesture of seeming hypocrisy which had, however, a deep political motive.

I remained in Istanbul until the end of 1923 and kept in close touch with the Greek community. In the course of my work, I had to peruse a large number of Greek documents on military and other subjects. The work was of absorbing interest and I gained a voluminous knowledge of the written language, now—I regret to say—largely forgotten. Socially, I saw far less of the Greeks than when I was in Smyrna, though I still talked with Bertha's Greek lady friends in her Bar and went to an occasional dance. At one of these I was by way of being the guest of the evening and on my arrival ten buxom Greek maidens were lined up for me to take my choice. I was greatly embarrassed and threw myself with bashful abandon upon the superb bosom of the nearest candidate for my favours.

During my last months in Constantinople I made an effort to systematize my study of Greek. I took a number of lessons at the Berlitz School where I found an excellent and painstaking teacher in Madame Vadhakhi. My work gave me sufficient practice in the written language, so I concentrated on learning to speak something between the literary language and the Anatolian dialect. I am thankful that I left Istanbul some weeks before the final evacuation. The Greek and other Christian minorities were tortured with apprehension as to what vengeance the Turks would wreak on them. Their fears were largely baseless. As in 1453, the Turk showed himself a wise and generous conqueror and comparatively few years passed before Turkey and Greece were on the most friendly terms, an almost unbelievable phenomenon when the history of the last century is considered.

My connection with the Greeks in Turkey was over, but eighteen months later, having obtained four months' leave from Palestine I found myself wandering about the Balkans again. After a month in Yugoslavia, I went on a walking tour in the Trentino and then took ship from Trieste to Peiraeus. I had never been in Athens before and was visiting it at an interesting time. Over a million refugees had come to Greece from Anatolia and about half of them had been settled round Athens. The city was already overpopulated and there was nothing for the refugees to do except take in each other's washing and live in the really remarkable settlements which were built for them. It is significant that, in spite of the sinister rôle which England had



played in the Greek catastrophe, the first of these<sup>6</sup> settlements was named after Byron.

I spent an interesting five weeks in Athens. Accommodation was a grave problem. The only hotel at which I could get a room was the Grande Bretagne which was ruinously expensive and subject to the same shortage of washing water as the rest of Athens. Eventually, I went to Neon Phaleron and went into Athens every day by the electric railway. Every day was completely full. I took Greek lessons in the early morning before going to Athens where I roamed the streets or sat in cafés reading Plato's Dialogues and Aristophanes translated into Modern Greek (a unique literary experience which I shall never forget). At night I visited night clubs or the refugees' settlements in company with my friend Maroussia Harin of the Near East Relief. Now that I come to think of it, she was the real reason why I had gone to Athens at all. I also went over to the Acropolis and other established "sights" but they seemed to me to be of small importance compared with the vast human problem presented by the refugees.

The political history of Greece during the past fifteen years has not been particularly inspiring. Within a short period the three principal Greek statesmen died. They were Venizelos, Papanastasiou and Michalopoulos and the poor quality of the remaining political leaders was largely responsible for the present almost totalitarian regime to which the last opposition died away in 1938. A taste of dictatorship has done Greece no harm. She was suffering from an overdose of democratic politics and the present regime, by disposing of the nuisance of party intrigue, has enabled the nation to oppose a united front to Italian aggression. The love of the Greeks for the British is almost touching. It began, perhaps, with Lord Byron, but this sentimental connection is now reinforced by a genuine admiration for British power and institutions and, above all, for the British Navy. It is disturbing to hear Englishmen criticising the Greeks in the light of a few glimpses which they caught of them in Salonika twenty-five years ago, when Greece was in a state of hopeless political turmoil. It is to be hoped that the military, naval and air missions now in Greece are not made up of this sort of person.

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Can officers of the Army honestly be encouraged to learn Modern Greek? The answer is, emphatically "No." A knowledge of languages is, generally speaking, not at all conducive to



a successful military career but a knowledge of Greek is positively fatal. A friend of mine told me the other day that now that Greece had entered the war on our side, he was hourly expecting to be appointed as S.S.O. in Trivandrum, for he was, he believed, the only qualified interpreter in Modern Greek in the army. He doubted, however, whether he could be more inactive in Trivandrum than he was in his present appointment. "No matter," he added, "my new plan of concentrating on amateur dentistry, fret-work and polo will, I feel confident, at length obtain me the post in Middle Eastern Intelligence which twelve years' experience of the Middle East and the Balkans and a knowledge of half a dozen languages have so far failed to do." My friend showed, of course, most reprehensible flippancy and I am sure I hope that he was exaggerating.

Trivandrum has, however, its points, so I will proceed to make a few observations on how to learn Greek. Of books on Greek there is quite a number but many of them are quite unsuitable. The best which I have seen so far is "Modern Greek Grammar" by Petraris, translated from the German by Rouse (Otto Sauer Method). This is quite a safe book for the spoken and written language. "Greek Self-taught" in the Marlborough Series is a most useful little book for the more formal vocabulary and is particularly sound on commercial terms.

The best dictionaries are "Modern Greek Dictionary" by Jannaris (John Murray):—This is an English-Greek dictionary and an invaluable book for anyone visiting Greece; it distinguishes carefully between words which are purely colloquial, purely literal or which are used in both speaking and writing. An excellent Greek dictionary for those who know Italian is "Dizionario-Greco-Moderno-Italiano" by E. Brighenti (Hoepli, Milan).

The pronunciation of Greek is easy but the intonation staccato and peculiar, and must be learned from a native. Modern Greek is particularly weak in phonemes or sound values. The alphabet has no symbols capable of expressing the common sounds of 'b', 'd', 'sh', 'ch', 'j' (as in English or French) or 'h.' The letter Beta is now pronounced as 'v' and Delta as hard 'th.' Pronunciation is according to accent which is always written and follows the same rules as are taught in English public schools where pronunciation is according to quantity or, more often, taste. Why accents are taught in schools I have never been able to find out. There is no evidence to show that they were ever written in classical Greek, for all manuscripts or inscriptions dating from classical times are in

capitals without accents. Personally I feel sure that, when speaking, the Greeks always observed the tonic accent, but when singing or intoning poetry they reverted, as they do now, to quantity. Of one thing one can be certain: the Greeks did not pronounce their language like British public schoolboys.

The Romaic language is exceedingly rich in idioms which they have borrowed from many different countries. The language is spoken at a tremendous pace but is usually very clearly enunciated. A very peculiar and interesting feature is the use of the indeclinable relative " $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ " "I saw the man whose horse you stole" becomes in Greek "I saw the man (  $\pi\omicron\upsilon$  ) you stole his horse." The curious thing about this construction is that it is not found, so far as I can discover, in any other European language nor in classical Greek. It is, however, found in Arabic and Persian. It is not found in Turkish though Greeks speaking Turkish often use the Persian indeclinable relative "kih" exactly as though it were " $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ ".

## THE PROBLEM OF FORCE TO SPACE

BY 2ND-LIEUT. M. E. COOKE

*"The soldier may be excused if his mind is not settled.  
He cannot be excused if it is set."*

To say that war is in a transitional stage is to be trite. War always is. Yet in no other way is it possible to sum up the epochal changes of the last few years. Mechanisation has set in; and though the moment of full cycle may not yet have dawned, there can be little doubt that we are moving—probably by bounds as our text-books say—towards an army of machinery as complete as navy and air force, or indeed as civil life.

Nevertheless we must avoid precipitancy. It is no more true to say that the defeat of the French was due to the dive-bomber and the tank, than to assert that the victors of the last war were the Americans, the tank, the blockade, or Lord Northcliffe. Victory is always the result of many factors; a truism as sound to-day as when Tiglath Pileser conquered; little as the Assyrian chariot may resemble modern weapons. Military history has too often lost its reputation in the eager choice of "keys to victory," for to oscillate between extremes is to oscillate between defeats: the French views of the Offensive in 1870, 1914 and 1940 forming the classic example. Let us examine, therefore, weapons which are ephemeral in the light of problems which are eternal.

Let us begin with the problem of force to space. Here we come up against a distinction which, at least in its present sense, is new—that between extensive and intensive warfare. It had its origin in 1914. Then for the first time armies bestraddled—not a mere battlefield—but a whole theatre of war. There were no flanks.

It is probable that this will never happen again. It arose from three things: bulk, dispersion, the tactics of attack. The growth of population, transport and medicine had produced armies of phenomenal size; the bullets had spread them out; the then tactics of attack failed to penetrate; for to concentrate numbers was but to concentrate casualties. Concentration had, as it were developed a low boiling point. To cram more than a limited number of bodies on to a given frontage produced no increase in military effect. Artillery had a higher boiling point; but at Passchaendale even this was reached under the special conditions

there prevailing; but it was too unwieldy an instrument to do more than bite a front. It could never run it through.

But the boiling point of tank concentration is on a cavalry scale. If heavy assault A.F.V.s are used, machine-guns—and hence volume-fire—are useless against them. Aimed weapons, in an army whose main armament is the L.M.G. and the field gun, are of necessity few and these few, forced to disclose their position by skirmishers, are still further reduced by bomb and shell. In default of the all-too-rare obstacle, an attack in force must nearly always succeed.

Consider the infantry man's point of view. In France and Belgium he had the same front which, in 1918, with larger forces, had strained him to the limit. True it was to some extent militarily reduced by the Maginot Line; but against that must be set the problem of area defence. Area defence is all-round defence which, in plain terms, means four fronts for one. But area defence also means depth and the greater the depth the greater the area; thus the ratio of force to space is relatively reduced. The attacker's power to concentrate is, however, quite unaffected. Then we come to the question of how much depth. We used to solve this question by reference to the advancing power of infantry during the hours of daylight and to the possibility of their receiving artillery support. So depth remained comparatively small. But what depth is necessary to stop tank attack? The mobility and endurance of tanks are comparatively so vast that they may exceed all present calculations. The very idea of depth may have to yield to defence in zones as extensive as provinces.

So the position of infantry is this—deprived of volume-fire, they must defend four fronts to a depth incalculably swollen and against the weapon which is assaulting them they can employ only a fraction of their power. Compare the number of bullets which, over a given area in a given time, a division can hurl at infantry with that it can hurl at tanks of the heavy variety. It is armed against infantry with a broad sword, against tanks only with a penknife. It is true that the total number of such tanks may be few, but the numbers at the decisive point are likely to be overwhelmingly many.

Think also of effective range. Long-range artillery and aircraft should have little effect against an armoured column—not so against their supplies and special carrying trucks—so that not until within 500 yards of the position are they in real danger; and 500 yards at twelve miles per hour is 125 yards at three miles per

hour. Moreover, the A.F.V., however inaccurate its shooting, is in mass far from the helpless target offered by the advancing infantryman.

But while the infantry frontage is thus magnified his (the infantryman's) numbers are diminished. To say nothing of the time necessary to train these masses, the absence of a French bulk army as a pivot, the numbers required to maintain the fighting soldier are growing almost visibly. Even in 1918 the need of shipbuilding, shellmaking, etc., began to make itself felt on the drafts to the B.E.F., and to-day, with the requirements of the air force, of anti-parachute defence, of back area garrisons, of A.R.P., the infantryman has ceased to typify national service after the 1914 fashion. He has so many competitors that he is becoming a mere drop in the bucket.

But where is this army going to fight? In the East, on the plains of Poland, in North Africa? All these areas are spacious without limit. Even in England in the unlikely event of numerous landings at diverse points far apart, the total "front," in comparison with the available force, will be exceedingly large. It is useless, then, to explain defeats as due to "fantastic fronts." "Fantastic fronts" are now the "normal." Extensive warfare has come to stay. This implies that once again there are flanks and once again there are cavalry to take advantage of the fact. But can we, in the eighteenth-century style, rely on cavalry to guard them? It remains to be seen. Several factors have, however, to be considered.

On an eighteenth-century battlefield, most of which was under the direct gaze of the commanding generals, cavalry movements were usually tactical. Not so the wide sweeps and deep lunges of their modern successors. The rear, the communications, the bases, the industrial centres, the civilian population, are all projected on to the battlefield. So innumerable, therefore, are the targets and so great is the attacker's power of dispersion and re-concentration that the defending cavalry may well be thought to have a hopeless task, more especially in the probable event of their being inferior.

There is, of course, an answer. Bases, industrial centres and communications must all be fortified. They must. But how then are we to provide a field army? The resources of even a modern state are not illimitable. In the eighteenth century only frontier zones had to be protected, yet the drain was hard felt on the battlefield—and remember the side with the initiative need



worry far less about fortresses than his opponent—so that if in addition to passive and active air defence, to air attack, to the navy, to shipping, to agriculture, to industry, to supply, to road-building, to maintenance, to gas protection, to anti-parachute protection and all the rest of it we are to provide a large infantry garrison to each of the majority of our important towns—and the “frontage” of a large town is not measured in yards—our field army will just disappear.

And here is demonstrated the falsity of the anti-tank arguments. It is true that the exposed surface of the tank is large, that its carrying power is small, that its requirements are many. It is true, therefore, that under equal conditions the gun is more powerful than armour and far cheaper to produce. But all this is not in point. So long as infantry remain a striking force, so long must their major weapon be the machine-gun and the mortar, and for all except organisational purposes we may add artillery, for in their present form they are part of the infantry battle. Yet so long as these weapons are required on a lavish scale, so long must the anti-tank power of this arm be but a fraction of its potential and for so long in consequence must armour defeat gun at the decisive point. Were the infantry division (though perhaps the brigade may be the strategical formation of the future) armed primarily with anti-tank weapons, it would no doubt produce fortresses impregnable to present methods of attack; but in so doing it has ceased to be a sword and become a shield. Valuable as a shield may be, we must couple an arm which can win victory with one which suffices only to avoid defeat. Thus an increase in anti-tank weapons involves, in measure according to its degree, not merely the mending of establishments, but the gradual metamorphosis of field force into garrison, and while this is happening, the striking power will grow elsewhere.

Thus we are returning strategically to Marlborough, tactically to Belisarius, and the change, however delayed, is irresistible. The army of the near future—how near will depend upon the length of the present conflict and the foresight of the combatants—will consist of a punch of A.F.V.s striking from a guard of fortresses. It will be supplied partly by road, to a small extent by rail, to an increasing extent across country, and it will protect itself at rest after the manner of a hedgehog. It will roll itself into a ball and stick out spikes. The spikes will be the anti-tank guns of the motor troops.

Its vehicles will be of many orders. There will be motor-cars impressed from civilian service who, like the Confederate volunteers of Jeb Stuart, will smell out the enemy and harass his movements. There will be a heavier vehicle upon which these are based; so that they shall gain in confidence and openings be exploited by fighting power. There will be skirmishers to locate weaknesses in battle and to cover the tactical manoeuvres of the weightier arm; there will be the "tank of the line," and the cavalry tank to exploit and to pursue success.

To all these must be added tanks that swim—to the nation which commands the sea these are an essential—a siege train of heavy cannon, of assault tanks and of weapons yet unborn. Supply and protection offer problems there is here no space to discuss, the air is overburdened with possibilities and question marks. Control and generalship, with their concomitants of orders, will be utterly changed in technique; even the use of gases must be revised.

Yet in all this welter of revolution the art of war will persist. Mobility, surprise and concentration remain the methods of victory. The eye for ground, the subtle stratagem, the logistical brain and, above all, the moral qualities of courage, aggressiveness and endurance make the soldier of to-morrow fellow to the soldiers of to-day and yesterday and grant that cord of unity which binds the aeons. Weapons change but the art of war rolls on; the great general none-the-less is he who blends the principles of war and fighting in their pristine proportions; for war is a side of humanity; and humanity, for all its diverse dresses, is as unchanging as the hills.

## SPAIN

BY CAPTAIN E. J. TOMSON-RYE

The recent visit of Herr Himmler to Madrid, and the more recent meeting between Herr Hitler and General Franco on the Franco-Spanish border, must have caused many people to wonder what course Spain will adopt in the next few months. To some people the meeting may have been reminiscent of another meeting which took place between the ruler of Spain and another military dictator at Bayonne about a hundred years ago. That meeting heralded much bloodshed and fighting and a period of close co-operation between the Spanish people and ourselves, finally ending with the expulsion of the French and a number of victories which are still celebrated to-day in song and story throughout the country. The recent meetings may justify some remarks on the Spanish people, their temperament and their potential fighting value.

As a general rule, English people know little about Spain or the Spaniards, and are inclined to associate them with civil war and the bullfight. As a matter of fact, they are as unique a people as are the British themselves and possess certain outstanding characteristics which should be taken into account in any military operations in which they may be engaged either as friend or foe.

The blending of the Iberians with the Moors, who occupied the greater part of the country until the fifteenth century, produced a hardy and adventurous race of people with a great culture and power of artistic expression. The conquest of Mexico and Peru followed the expulsion of the Moors. Spanish soldiers occupied the Netherlands and Italy, and it was not until the defeat of the Armada off the coasts of Britain, and the loss of the battle of Rocroi some years later, that Spain ceased to be the paramount naval and military power in Europe.

The rest of the mighty Empire gradually disintegrated, but it has left its mark on the people of Spain. Foreigners may regard Spain as a second-class country, but every Spaniard likes to consider himself a "hidalgo" or nobleman, and he will resent it if not treated with the courtesy which he considers to be his due. El Cid, Ferdinand and Isabella, Philip II and the Duke of Wellington, who as a grandee of Spain and Duke of Ciudad

Rodrigo is regarded as a national hero, all go to make that innate racial pride which renders the Spaniard so touchy and easy to offend. As a corollary to this, all Spaniards without exception are individualists. Noblemen do not like to play second fiddle to anybody, and this is without doubt one of the reasons for the number of civil wars which have been waged in the country during the past hundred years, and which are of almost annual occurrence in Mexico and South America. This leads on to another outstanding characteristic of the people; for if wars between nations are futile, wars between two parties of the same nation must be even more senseless, and there must be some reason to account for their frequency in Spain. The answer lies in the lack of compromise. Having once made up his mind no Spaniard will willingly give way or cede a point to his adversary.

History is full of examples of this national obstinacy. The Inquisition, the Carlist Wars, the loss of the American Colonies, and finally the recent Civil War are but a few examples which have spilt oceans of blood and prove only too clearly that a Spaniard would rather die than "agree with his adversary while he is in the way with him." If individualism and lack of compromise are the two outstanding characteristics in the make-up of the Spaniard there are still others which should be given consideration when dealing with him.

There is probably no race in the world which has a greater command of courtly language and pretty phrases. Although these generally mean nothing, an answer in the same phraseology is generally expected. The poverty of the English language on these occasions is most noticeable, and no Englishman can begin to understand Spaniards until he has learnt the idiom of the language. A working knowledge is not enough. No doubt Hitler was paid some very pretty compliments at the Spanish frontier. The future will tell if they can be taken seriously.

Procrastination and delay are rampant throughout the country. Englishmen who know Spain have frequently stated that the motto of the country is "manana," which means "tomorrow." The greatest lover of Spain must admit that this is true, and no doubt this failing coupled with the national dislike of taking orders has contributed greatly to the poor organizing abilities of the nation as a whole.

In this respect it is most noteworthy that in the recent Civil War both sides co-opted technical advisers and troops from other nations. When left to their own devices in Morocco disasters

were frequent. At Monte Arruit a Spanish force suffered the greatest reverse ever inflicted on European regular troops by tribesmen during the twentieth century. However, it is in the field of civilian industry that this lack of organizing ability and drive is most noticeable. Although Spain is rich in mineral wealth, before the Civil War there was hardly a mining concern that was not in the hands of foreigners. South America is predominantly Spanish, yet there is no Spanish-owned steamship line to connect Spain to her former colonies.

Coupled with the courtly manner and the leisured atmosphere which pervade Spain, there is an underlying strain of cruelty and barbarism. The saying "Scratch a Russian and you will find a Tartar," may be equally adapted to: "Scratch a Spaniard and you will find a Moor." The bullfight which is the national pastime is a bloodthirsty sport. Although it has an inner and artistic meaning which is unknown to English people it is undeniably crude, but in his heart of hearts every young Spaniard, no matter what his station in life, would like to be a bullfighter. There are tales of terrible cruelties to Frenchmen during the Peninsular War, and no doubt these were again perpetrated during the last Civil War. In Morocco Abd el Krim, the Moorish leader, made a long journey to surrender to the French rather than to the Spaniards, because, as any Spaniard will say with a smile and a significant gesture, "He knew we would cut his throat."

There are other factors which have all played their part in the make-up of modern Spain. The Church, illiteracy, poor communications, the lack of a middle class, a feudal system of land tenure and absentee landlords all have played their part, but the basic outline of the Spanish character has been portrayed in the preceding paragraphs. Briefly it may be summarised as intense individualism, unwillingness to compromise, poor organizing ability, mixed with a laughing indolence through which runs a strain of cruelty.

Militarily, Spain has a great tradition which has persisted in spite of many defeats. In the army the glories of the past are kept alive; regiments are named after famous victories, some of which were fought before Britain had an army at all. At one time the infantry of Spain was renowned throughout Europe, and even to-day the Spanish word for foot soldiers has been taken into use in nearly every European country.



No doubt the Civil War altered the Spanish army to a great extent, but the officers and men must be the same. Like all conscript armies, it consisted of a corps of officers who were posted to units for a tour of duty, in the same way as our naval officers move from ship to ship. Warrant officers and N.C.O.s were the same, and were originally conscripts who had decided to make the army their profession. A few of the junior N.C.O.s were intelligent conscripts, who held the rank for their term of service.

The artillery were considered to be the Corps d'élite and got the pick of the men, the cavalry and the infantry getting the leavings. The men nearly all came from country districts and were of a very fine physique, though the level of intelligence was very low, seventy per cent. being entirely illiterate. This, of course, had a very great effect on training, and by British standards the men were poorly trained. Equipment was also poor, and little effort was made to keep it at a high standard of repair or working order.

In spite of all this the Spanish soldier is not a man to be despised. The Civil War has shown that he is extremely brave; he is very frugal, and being used to a hard and rough life can make do on little and does not present the same administrative problem as the British soldier. The officers have all had war experience, not only in the Civil War but also in Morocco, and although they may lack technical ability and organizing power, there are no doubt plenty of potential allies who would be ready to help them.

In addition to the conscripted units Spain has also got a force of regular soldiers. This consists of the Foreign Legion, commonly known as "El Tercio," and the Moorish battalions known as "Regulares." The Foreign Legion is really a misnomer as it consists principally of Spaniards. The men enlist for a term of years for service in Morocco. They are well trained and disciplined, and imbued with a tremendous *esprit de corps*. Their officers are seconded from the army in Spain. The "Regulares" are similar to our own and the Italian native African units. The personnel are drawn to a great extent from those Moors who have in the past been such a thorn in the side of both France and Spain. They are considered to be of high fighting value. It was the existence of these forces which made the Civil War in Spain possible, as a great part of the early success of the Nationalists can be attributed to the fine fighting qualities of the Legion and the Moorish troops.

In any war in which they were fighting with allies the defects of the Spanish character would at once become apparent. During the Peninsular War Wellington found the Spanish generals and the Spanish authorities impossible to deal with. To-day it is doubtful if matters have improved. Their allies whoever they be, may put up-to-date weapons into the hands of the Spanish soldier, and help his officers to plan and organize battles, but they may find that an old and proud race does not take kindly to foreign domination.

## THE ARMY AND CIVIL LIFE—A COMPARISON

By E. C. O.

As a civilian I used to sell steel and, although I was an unimportant employee of my firm, I was provided in my office with a Dictaphone into which I could breathe an odd letter or two or some routine report in the matter of a few minutes whenever I came in. Now this was provided not because it was an amusing toy but because of this fact: my firm paid me at a rate which worked out to some 6/- or 7/- per hour and, in order to be able to do this, it was necessary for me to bring in to them some £5 or £6 worth of business per hour. For every hour that I wasted inside the office, therefore, they were losing about this sum of money and it was cheaper to make use of the combination of a machine and a typist who was much more lowly paid. Moreover, it was much more efficient, for I could not have typed as well or as quickly as the typist, and I feel a certain amount of doubt that she would have been able to do my job, although that is by no means so certain.

As a contrast to this, I was walking down Whitehall one day in January last, when I saw through one of the windows of the War Office a Major, sitting before a large desk, very laboriously tapping out a letter on a typewriter. The moral is obvious. If you employ a man of highly trained executive ability, then every moment that he is not using that ability is wasted. It is extravagant and inefficient to employ a highly skilled man in tasks which can be accomplished by one of lesser (and therefore, cheaper) parts.

Let us look at other cases. Every company or squadron has a clerk who is drawn from its ranks. When, as often enough happens, he has to be transferred to other duties, another man must be brought in and trained, and a good deal of time and trouble is wasted. Now if we had squadron secretaries, who were not fighting men at all, they would be able to deal very much more quickly and capably with the routine, and Squadron Leaders, who are executive officers, would be released for other tasks which could only be undertaken by them with their special training. Under the squadron secretaries would work quartermaster-clerks who would also be non-combatants. At present, Army accounts are made clumsy and difficult because they are

over-simplified in order to enable ordinary soldiers to understand and work them. By employing specialist personnel, it would become possible to use the less obvious but very much more efficient and smooth-working system which is in use elsewhere.

In exactly the same way as it has to find its clerk, a squadron has to provide itself with cooks. These are trained soldiers who have done a short course in cookery. They are not specialists, and they, again, are subject to being frequently changed around. They work under the supervision of the Messing Officer, who is himself at the best only an amateur "dauber." Try to imagine the horror with which a large firm of caterers, such as J. Lyons & Co., would greet the suggestion of putting such people in charge of one of their branches. Before they will entrust even a small part of one of their kitchens to a man, a concern such as this make him spend three or four years learning his job, and we may be quite sure that they only adopt this course because they find that it is well repaid in greater efficiency and economy. Once again why not non-combatant specialist cooks, working under the supervision of a proper centralised department?

Is it not a waste to employ executive officers in administering justice? After all, they know as much about this as they do about cooking. The whole business of courts-martial could surely be done better, quicker and more economically by specialist Judge-Advocate-General-Department officials working on the lines of the Metropolitan Stipendiary Magistrates in London.

In opposition to all this, of course, it will be said that in the field, one cannot have a great cluster of non-combatants about, that clerks and cooks must be soldiers in order to carry on under service conditions, that they must be able, in the last resort, to defend themselves. True, but one has to weigh against this the greater efficiency of organisation and the consequent improvement in the powers of the actual fighting men, and to achieve this, I think it would be worth risking the possibility of the cooks and the clerks not being able to defend themselves on the very few occasions when they might be subject to attack.

In a similar way, among the actual fighting ranks, there is a lack of specialisation. Each man is made to train himself in the use of every weapon with which his unit is equipped—to know less and less about more and more until he knows very nearly nothing about anything, instead of to know more and more about less and less until he knows practically everything about almost nothing. The other two Services do not work on this system.

The Navy has its highly specialised and sharply divided branches. Both have schools where apprentices are trained for specialised employment. The German Army has specialised troops—assault troops, with special training, and special equipment and weapons. It does not seem necessary that the man who drives a tank should be a highly skilled gunner as well, or vice versa. Admittedly, all the crew should know sufficient about each other's work to "get back home" if any of them get killed, but this does not demand a very great amount of knowledge, and their greater efficiency as a crew of really highly trained specialists will very much decrease the chances of any of them getting killed in the first instance.

Highly trained personnel of this type (drawn from apprentice establishments) would not only improve the actual handling of the vehicles, but it would relieve the workshops of a large volume of small repairs which could be undertaken by really skilled drivers. Furthermore, with the introduction of larger guns into tanks and the placing of bigger weapons into the hands of the infantry, specialised training of a high order in gunnery is becoming more important. The supporting Arms have already, of course, a very considerable degree of specialisation. But here also this has not been carried to anything like the same degree as it has in industry, and until it has they cannot hope to achieve a comparable degree of efficiency.

Perhaps the most important aspect of this question, however, is that the man who offers himself to the recruiting office does so because he wants to become a soldier, and we may therefore assume that he will be of a type more suited for this than for being turned into a clerk or a cook or a storekeeper. When it is possible to enter the Army as a specialist non-combatant, we shall get more suitable men with more suitable qualifications to do these jobs.

The other great factor, which has so much assisted industrial development, is the system of free exchange—what we can summarise in the one word "competition." Upon this depend the laws of supply and demand, and the keynote of the system maybe said to be this: "The price at which I sell this article to this man is so much because I cannot get more for it from anyone else," or "The wage which I pay this man is so much because I cannot get another who can carry out the same work for less." By this system, only the most efficient survive, by it is the stimulus for enterprise given. Competition and the law of supply and demand keep the employer and the employee "up to scratch" because both of them know that they can survive only by putting out their maximum effort.



Now, of course, in the Army this factor is entirely absent. A branch of the Service can go on being inefficient for a long time because it is competing with no one, and it will not be ousted by a better because of this. In the same way, officers are still promoted more upon seniority than upon ability, although competitive examination has provided a limited answer. Rarely is the sustained maximum effort obtained from officers or men, because they have not the stimulus of knowing that failure to produce it will mean loss of employment or loss of money. Certainly, in wartime the competitive element is there, and the cost of failure or partial failure more grim. But then it is too late. The time at which it is necessary is whilst training in preparation for battle.

Another example is provided by mechanisation. Under the present system of repair and maintenance, it is better for a lazy driver if his vehicle is "off the road," for while it is he has only to wait around the L.A.D. and give what limited aid he can, instead of spending three or four hours a day driving and another two or three hours in maintenance. He has a much easier time of it and he loses nothing by it. Consequently, no matter how good the spirit in the unit, nor how strong the discipline, some vehicles spend a length of time under repair which would seem fantastic to a commercial vehicle owner.

But can this competitive spirit be introduced into military organization, and would it bring good results? I think it could. It would involve principles which are revolutionary, but nevertheless workable. For example, units could be given an efficiency grant for which they would qualify by undergoing annual examination and inspection in all their activities. This would be distributed as a bonus upon the pay of all officers and men within it. Manœuvres could be organised upon a competitive basis, and promotions based upon individual performance in them and upon records of the proficiency in training generally throughout the year, length of service not being essential for the attainment of any rank. Technical pay could be made dependent upon results—for example, a driver mechanic's trade pay would depend upon the number of hours his vehicle was on the road, or upon the number of hours driving he actually carried out.

This may sound far-fetched and impracticable, but problems of payment by results are worked out in very much more complex conditions than this in industry, and with considerable success. It would no doubt disturb the ordinary peacetime tranquillity of Army life, but we are at war and we must get results. Such

methods have been tried for many years in civil life, there is nothing at all new in any of them and they have got results and they have got results in a big way.

Long after Al Capone had done such great execution in Chicago with sawn-off shotguns and Tommy guns, the Army (whose interest in such matters might well be thought to be more justifiable) was still hawking with experimental types of automatic weapons and training with "Great War" Lewis guns. Our enemy finally taught us the value of the submachine-gun. No doubt if field guns had any use other than in the hands of soldiers, our present types would have been outshadowed years ago by their non-military counterparts. As it is, the Army cheerfully, nay proudly, produces its 25-year-old cannon for service to-day. It would perhaps hardly be progressive to offer Economy as one of the advantages of payment by results in the Army.

## OFFICERS' MESSES

By "Mouse"

In the last number of the *Journal* a scribe, signed "Balu," delivered a hot, persuasive, logical, cogent and powerful attack on the grand old Institution of the Officers' Mess with particular reference to the Indian Army Messes.

Always ready to absorb new views on the antiquated customs of the Indian Army, especially when expressed courageously, I have re-read "Balu's" criticisms with profound interest. If I say that—after mature consideration—I think he is talking through his hat, if I express my candid opinion that I have not read such entertaining drivel in the *U. S. Journal* since I used to write for it—I feel I might give "Balu" a sore head.

But, seriously, I must say I disagree strongly with all the arguments produced in this article for the abolition of the Mess. I am, however, delighted to see that the *Journal* is prepared to allow unorthodox and revolutionary proposals to be aired in its somewhat air-conditioned pages, proposals which may offend the prestige, prick the conscience, or even quicken the intelligence of those who rule over us. That is what the *Journal* is for.

General de Gaulle has been sentenced to death by the Vichy Government because he advocated quicker and bigger mechanization of the French Armies long before the French went to war. Because his opinion was right and was proved in the eating of that horrible pudding, now being masticated by Petain, Gamelin & Co., this revolutionary soldier has been declared an outlaw by his country.

I don't think "Balu" deserves such ostracism for his idiotic article, which we might now examine.

In the first place "Balu," with the hit-or-miss complacency of all junior officers, places all the blame on the "senior" officer. "Our senior officer," he writes, "does not perhaps realise that it is his insistence of the spirit of "Mess life when I was young" that has helped to make the average officers' Mess the unpopular institution it is to-day." Later: "There are, however, still a number of the old school who consider that a very strict Mess discipline is the hall-mark of a good regiment."

I believe I could preach a sermon on either of these texts, but I, unfortunately at the moment, have got no available Church. The reader will see—and I hope understand sympathetically—the author's obsession with the bugbear of all Junior Officers—the "senior" officer. To most Second-Lieutenants their Majors are Hindu-God Ganeshas; to most Majors Brigadiers appear (quite wrongly in several cases) as Founts of Wisdom; to many Brigadiers a Military Secretary to a Governor (or even the Comptroller of the Viceroy's House) appears as an answer to his maidenly prayer.

This inferiority complex of junior officers towards those senior in rank is ridiculous and, both from my personal experience and from observation, I am quite convinced that it is their own fault. I (as a Subaltern) had a Colonel Blimp once to deal with; he was a Dictator, impervious to all argument and extremely violent in his opinions. We were a small mess on the Frontier (not half so big a mess—the Frontier, I mean—as it became since I left) and I then discovered the Great Secret of the Diplomacy of Housekeeping: always keep your powers wet and your curry powders dry. That is a simple principle of mess-dieting which any young Mess Secretary, worth his morning Salts, knows.

I admit I chafed a little at having to "click heels" each evening in the middle of an instructive article in "The Bystander" which I might be reading or in the middle of some unnecessary story which I might be telling; but, looking back, I don't think the exertion of rising from my chair to say good-evening to a Senior Officer in my battalion ever did me any harm, except, perhaps, when he offered me a drink which I accepted always on principle.

As regards mess uniform I agree with "Balu." It is an expensive, unbecoming and unnecessary item during war time; but I feel sure that every regiment entertaining their friends in their Mess would like to wear Service clothes, either patrol jackets with overalls or Khaki. For ordinary nights dinner jackets, a practice adopted now by most thinking battalions, should be easy to wear.

I disagree most emphatically with any slipshod idea of making a Mess into a "chummery," either from the economical or sartorial points of view. I remember at the end of the last war being ordered by my C. O. (I was a temporary Adjutant suffering from infantile paralysis) to administer a raspberry to the senior Subaltern (a delightful planter, aged 50, suffering from Gordon's or Booth's disease) for being improperly dressed at Mess last

Sunday night. I delivered the rebuke, feeling rather like a choir boy ticking off an Archdeacon, but the admonishment was received intelligently, and the Archdeacon patted me on the head and said "there there."

Later, several months later, I heard the story. The C. O. had given the concession on Thursday and Sunday nights for officers to dine in mess in ordinary clothes, lounge suits or dinner jackets. Gradually this concession became abused—officers appeared to think they could sit down to dinner on these two hot nights in casual garments—and the storm reached its peak when my planter-senior Subaltern-friend slipped into dinner one Sunday night in 1918 wearing tennis flannels! He admitted that he would never have done so if he had not seen others doing it before. He didn't know that this was the opportunity for which the C. O. was waiting (and for which I was the miserable secret weapon), to use this incident as an example to improve mess conduct. Thereafter our mess was a model; after a bath we appeared in appropriate and clean clothes, we were punctual, we didn't stand each other any drinks, we arose (with a chorus of silent blasphemy) to our feet when the C. O. and Second-in-Command came into the anteroom, we ate our food—the harmony amicably spoilt by side-references to the cook, the Mess Secretary, the C. O.'s latest "Training Memo," and speculation as to whether 2nd-Lieut. Snooks was on the tiles again to-night with the local body-snatcher, Miss Gwendoline Tool.

We were, in fact, a small party of men, composing our differences, examining each other, arguing with our "Seniors" with the greatest freedom (I was once threatened with arrest in the last War for telling my partner at Bridge that he was a damned fool) and making and moulding ourselves into a unit. It is impossible to know anybody until you live with them; but it is vitally important that, for a unit to bring its full power into war, the officers and men of that unit must be bound as closely as possible, knowing each other's strengths and weaknesses, knowing all the prejudices, beliefs, thoughts and character of each other.

You won't get that spirit in a boarding-house or in a chum-mery. You need a Mess. You need discipline among officers as among the rank and file. In a recent training pamphlet from the War Office I was impressed by its insistence on close-order drill parades, even when the officers and men were tired, as a method (proved and tried, for instance, by the Guards' Brigade



and the Baluch Regiment) to make a unit a solid, whole and responsive instrument in the hands of its C.O.

What the rank and file have to do is the same job exactly, as their officers must do. And, therefore, I cannot see why "Balu" ignores the messing arrangements of the bulk of the unit, which are organised and controlled on a regimental basis, for the economy and good of the whole. Why should the officers of the same unit be granted the special privilege of being permitted to mess about in chummeries and cafés?

At the witching hour of dinner-time, sounded by all the bugles, are no officers of a unit to be present? Are they all to disappear into their scattered bungalows, flats, cafés and what-nots just because the flag outside their Quarter-Guard has been lowered at early sunset?

The proposal just does not make sense to me.

For the economic point raised by "Balu," I have sympathy. Deep sympathy, as I have had bitter arguments, and listened to bitter discussions regarding the allocation of Mess subscriptions to unnecessary and expensive entertainments. But Mess economy is, and is meant to be, the concern of all officers, and the latest joined subaltern has the same right to express his opinion as his C.O. Quite rightly, the C.O. need not necessarily accept the majority opinion and may overrule it if necessary—but the good C.O. encourages free expression of opinions from his juniors and, if from his experience he has to disagree with them regarding the important questions of buying a ham for the next visit of the local and unpopular General, or changing "The Field" to "Life," he disregards his temporary unpopularity.

The bad C.O. (who, likes his ham and his "Life"), bows to the dictum of his flippant and extravagant subalterns and the impoverished have to pay their share. It is that mentality which makes a Mess unpopular with the ordinary hardworking decent regimental bloke—and makes it popular with all sorts of unnecessary visitors.

Napoleon, I think, said that "there is no such thing as a bad regiment; there is only a bad Colonel." I think this axiom might fairly be applied to Messes and Mess Presidents.

I would not have gone to the trouble of writing these personal opinions if I had not noticed "Balu's" article taken up in *The "Statesman"* of the 28th, October, in a second-heading article headed: "Scrap the Mess."

Quoting almost verbatim "Balu's" delightful attack on Mess customs The "Statesman" (who ought to know better), has this final paragraph to reinforce the Editor's ideas on this subject:

"Vast social changes have been wrought already by the war; more will surely come, and it is unlikely that the Army will be able to survive these stirring times unchanged. The Blimps who are too prone to say, "Mess life nowadays is not what it was when I was young," forgetting that their grandfathers probably said very much the same kind of thing, are passing, and with them perhaps one of the most distinctive traditions of a military career, the Regimental Mess. The infiltration, since the war, of large numbers of emergency-commission officers into regular units may hasten the process of dissolution. If this happens there is no need for crocodile tears. Too long has the Army remained aloof from common contact with the civilian population, and if the war makes new bonds of respect and sympathy between the two it will have done some good. For if the present struggle teaches anything it is that war to-day is the civilian's concern as much as the professional soldier's and any development which serves to remove old prejudices and give wider horizons will compensate for anything lost in trapping. The glorious traditions will endure whatever the outward changes."

It makes me angry. I may (Heaven help me) be an embryonic Blimp, but there are so many misleading statements in each sentence of this article which are not worth bothering about that I will concentrate on one only: "Too long has the Army remained aloof from common contact with the civilian population, etc. . . ." Is that true? What does "common contact" mean? Who are the "civilian population" who make "common contact" with British soldiers and officers in India?

## PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

### I

In April, 1915, the Battalion had been three months or more in France but it had spent the time learning the routine of trench life. Although there had been a fair number of casualties and considerably more hard work performed by way of field fortifications, it had not up to that time experienced a large battle.

On this particular night it was obvious that a big battle had started. From reserve billets the battalion had marched at short notice up a refugee-thronged road and not long after nightfall had halted off the road near a farm house. The halt was a long one but the evening was warm and the ground was dry so that, in spite of certain misgivings as to what the next few hours were going to have in store for us, we enjoyed the rest. The night was lit by a half-moon but, owing to the amount of cloud, for the major part of the time it was fairly dark. The constant rise and fall of Very Lights on all sides added to the general visibility.

At about eleven o'clock the word was passed for section commanders. I being a corporal went off to hear the platoon commander's orders. It was to be a night attack on a wood which, from where we were, looked merely an indefinite smudge in the distance. It was a very simple plan. Companies were to be in single rank in line. Two companies were to be in the front line and two in the second line which was to be about fifty paces in rear. Behind our battalion was to come the Sixteenth Battalion who were also to be deployed into single rank. Direction was to be by the centre. Our company was to be in the front line. We were to take the wood, go through it and rally on the far side. That was about all there was to it. It was something of this sort that we had been expecting and it did not take long for me to explain the operation to my section.

In due course the battalion moved out to take up its starting line. The deployment was done very deliberately. When the advance started one's chief preoccupation was to keep some sort of dressing. All went uneventfully until a brushwood fence with a wire was reached that went at an angle across the front. This could not be crossed in absolute silence and an enemy party that was lying out somewhere just in front fired a few rounds and must have then fallen back. Once across the obstacle we quickened our pace but almost immediately after this a few Very Lights went

up from the edge of the wood, which was now about 100 yards away, and hell was loosened. The whole edge of the wood was lit by a line of flame and the noise was louder than anything I have ever heard before or since.

Rifles and machine-guns seemed to occupy every inch of the front. It just took one's breath away. Every one dropped on their bellies instinctively. I doubt if any training could have kept men advancing without pause in face of the shock of that fire. Everyone started firing. In my case my rifle jammed after five rounds which, by the way, was quite a common thing to happen with the rifles we had. This gave me time to think. I looked at the line of fire in front. Then at the forms of my comrades around me. Some of these were obviously dead. One of the latter I could recognise. He was an excellent fellow—an old regular soldier who had become a corporal in my platoon. The ground thudded with the strike of bullets. I can remember the sequence of thought. It was: "We can't stay here or we'll all be laid out. We can't go back. The only way out is to go forward. Why doesn't somebody realise this and get people going?" Then: "Perhaps the Officers are all laid out. Perhaps it is up to me to do something as I am a corporal." I had just decided and was getting on to my feet when from behind I could see a few figures from one of the rear lines advancing. This strengthened my resolution and my "Come on boys!" was effective enough to get the remainder of the men around me on to their feet and we continued the advance at the double and with a yell.

As we advanced, the fire in front miraculously lessened and soon we were at and across the German trench. A sound of movement in the undergrowth of the wood prevented us from halting and into the wood we followed. Here one got separated and, as one pressed on, being torn at by brambles and stumbling over low branches, each man called out, "Come on the Tenth!" or "Sixteenth!" as the case might be, to avoid being attacked by one's own side. Just inside the wood were some guns which, it turned out afterwards, the Bosch had captured from us that afternoon.

It was a fairly deep wood of about 150 yards and those of us who got through seemed very few. However, those who did had forgotten about the orders to halt at the far side of the wood and on we went, first across one field through a gate and on to the far side of the next field. This was a long one and by the time I got there I found myself with one or two others only and there was not a German in sight. I suddenly remembered the orders to

stay on the far edge of the wood and so we retraced our steps. Not unnaturally perhaps we were fired on by our own fellows when we neared the wood again.

Along by the wood a remarkable sight could be seen. Men were standing about in little groups chatting, lighting cigarettes, showing off German helmets and other trophies and recounting their experiences. Even I with my limited military experience knew that this was all wrong. I began to look around for someone to give orders about consolidation. I couldn't find anyone senior to myself, however, and, once again, feeling rather bored with this N.C.O. business and the responsibility entailed, I decided I had to do something about it. I decided to dig in on the line of the first hedge beyond the wood and collected about twenty men of both battalions and put them on to the task. We had only the hand entrenching implement or grubber but it was remarkable how soon we made some kind of cover and cleared away the grass and undergrowth at the bottom of the hedge to allow rifles to be fired through it. My military knowledge did not rise to the giddy heights of sending out a patrol in front to locate the enemy or even to the more elementary need for putting out a covering party.

By the time I was beginning to take a pride in the defences we were constructing, an officer arrived. He was no one I knew and it was too dark to see his badges but I imagined he was a Staff officer. Much to my disappointment he said that the line I had chosen was no good for it would be enfiladed from the German position on the left as soon as it was daylight. He then led us all away further right and got us to fill a gap in the line to the right of the original German trench we had taken. Here we dug in again and we had to work hard for it was just about daylight. The night attack was over.

Looking back, the pause that took place in front of the German line could not have been a very long one. The official history talks of it as being a momentary pause. However, it seemed a long time and next day one could see easily where it had been made. It was well marked by the line of bodies lying there. I think myself that it must have lasted for about thirty seconds at least, but that was a good deal too long. As soon as we did move on the Germans' resolution faded and they went. This proves that every second's delay meant the loss of more men. That night the battalion lost all but four of its officers and fifty per cent. of the men.

"KANUK."



## II

I had forgotten it until, the other day, someone talked about area defence and tactical gaps.

The scene was near Hooze in the summer of 1915. We were due to relieve a famous Irish battalion in a part of the line which was new to us. I went up with the reconnaissance party. The guide took us up the shell-torn Menin Road which was easier going than the communication trench. We were at the apex of the salient, and star-shells and Very Lights were illuminating the night sky on all sides. A sudden concentration of "crumps" on the road forced us to take shelter in a culvert. I was looking for landmarks, and somehow two stuck in my memory. One was a typical blasted tree, the top half of the gaunt trunk torn down until it made a triangle with the ground, with one bare branch pointing up to the sky like a beckoning finger. The other was a whitish jumble of ruined wall and sandbags about 200 or 300 yards away, which was pointed out to me as a bit of the German front line. When the shelling died down, we moved off to the left into our own line.

The relief was delayed and it must have been two or three weeks later when I went up again, this time with a tactical advance party going up one day before the battalion. An Irish guide met us. My company commander and the guide led the party of some ten or so N.C.O.s and I brought up the rear. We moved along the Menin Road for a while and then got into the communication trench running more or less parallel on the left-hand side. The going was slower here and eventually we left the trench and moved forward in the open. It was a black night. Desultory machine gunning was going on in the distance but around us it was very quiet. Our advance was checked for a moment, and I think by the light of a star-shell, I saw the blasted tree with the beckoning finger a little way ahead on our right. We continued our advance, moving slowly over old trenches, shell-holes, derelict wire and so on. To my surprise, we did not strike off to the left but continued straight on. This surprised me and for the moment I thought the line might have changed. After another hundred yards or so, however, I began to get suspicious. I tugged at the man ahead of me, sent up an order to halt, and followed it by passing up a message up to the company commander to say that I thought we were going in the wrong direction and should have moved over to the left. A minute or so later came back a curt reply telling me, none too politely, to mind my own business. And on

we went—but slower. Fifty yards and a halt. Fifty yards and a halt. By this time I was getting alarmed, and sent up another message. No reply came back, but our progress got still slower. Finally we were halted and crouching on the ground, when back to me came a message “Guide has lost the way. Does any one know the way?” Several of the N.C.O.s had been up with me in the reconnaissance party, and I was surprised that none of them appeared to know where they were. I was thoroughly alarmed, as I had a suspicion that we had blundered through the Hun line. I whispered back, “About Turn! Follow me and no noise. We are behind the Hun line.” I tried to steer a course straight back. After we had gone about fifty yards, however, a rocket went up followed by star-shells on our right, and a German machine-gun opened on us. It could not have been more than a hundred yards away. We lay doggo—not daring to move. After a minute or so, the machine-gun stopped and off we started again. We had not gone very far, however, when the Hun put up a regular Brocks’ Benefit of Lights, the machine-gun opened up again and rifle fire came from close at hand on our right and from some distance away on the left. We dropped into a trench, which seemed to lead in the right direction. Just about then, up went some Very Lights from our own front line, and in the general illumination I saw momentarily, several hundred yards ahead and slightly on our right, something which leapt into my memory—a whitish jumble of sandbags and wall. I had my bearings—more or less. A whispered colloquy—“Yes! I know roughly where we are. But this trench probably leads into the Irish front line. They will know there are none of their people in it and they’ll bomb us to hell if we get too near. And you know these bloomin’ Irishmen. They’ve probably got some pretty scheme of their own invention for dealing with any Huns who try this line. No. It’s nasty outside, but it’s probably safer.” And so out we got. And what a night! Both sides by this time thoroughly aroused. We were well in rear of the German front line. Their fire seemed to come from more or less the same positions, so we got back again into the trench and moved carefully forward some 200 or 300 yards. It wasn’t easy; the trench was an old one, full of shell holes and odd wire and muck. When I judged we were about level with the whitish wall position, I got them out. There was a bit of subdued grumbling and some vile language in undertones. But I was feeling better. Danger lends variety to the vocabulary and I remember whispering hoarsely to a war-worn sergeant, something

to the effect of "For—'s sake, do as you are—well toïd; I didn't get you into this—mess, but I'll get you out." By this time the Irish were firing. Everything went high, of course. Several men were wounded sometime—I never quite knew when. It was a slow progress crawling to our own front line. A few of us went a bit ahead and shouted when we reached the wire. Our lurid language, I imagine, finally convinced the Irishmen that we were genuine, and they told us to move to our left a couple of hundred yards, and then they would guide us in. We did so. The German line was about 150 yards or so away. Ours was a slow and painful progress as the whole countryside by this time was thoroughly alarmed. I think one or two of the N.C.O.s were hit here, but we got them all in. Half an hour later I was squatting in the Irish trench outside their company commander's tiny dug-out with a double rum.

Irish company commander: "I'm damn sorry. Our C.S.M. was to have brought you up but he had another job and this man said he knew the way."

Irish guide: "I did, sorr, but it all looks quite different at night."

My company commander: "Why the hell didn't you stop us, Pieface, when you knew we were going wrong."

The rum burned in my throat and the thought burned in my brain—"It all looks quite different at night!"

## DUFFER IN ASSAM

By JOHN HELLAND

Pick up any reasonable atlas you like, look along the eastern border of Assam and there you will find the little Valley State of Manipur with its capital at Imphal. Only a few years ago, its people worshipped devils: to-day they are most untouchable Hindus.

The strip of country I speak of runs south past the Loktak Lake, that great swamp where the roar of the rising duck and geese is as the roar of a medium bomber: past the east of that lake to the tangled mass of hills that bar Assam from Tammu on the Burmah border. Your atlas should show you Tammu.

A smooth-cheeked subaltern of twenty-three summers, one John Griffin by name, just arrived in Imphal, led a small column of two hundred Gurkhas of the Assam Rifles south along the road from Imphal towards Tammu. The day was hot; the dust rose from the rough earthen track and sauntered across the green paddy fields; the string of six hundred Naga coolies chorused their one-to-four-note chant. To this magic rhythm the little force swung along its way.

At Thobal that evening John Griffin halted his men and bivouacked under the open sky by the muddy, deep-banked river, to wait the arrival of another column under a seasoned captain whose advice he sought.

That night, by a camp-fire whisky in hand, our romantic urchin listened to this advice, to the wisdom of age untinged with imagination:

"Now, look here. Chuck aside everything you've ever learnt in Mesopotamia and start afresh. Fighting these primitive Kukis is quite simple, really. Put your flankers out like this:" He put matches on the ground; "in front of your column, like two horns, and move like that along the path. It's



slow, half a mile an hour, but sure. If you bump into a stockade across the path, the points of the horns will reach round the two flanks of the stockade, turn the enemy flanks and force him to clear out. That's all there is to it except to keep your eyes open for *panjis*. They're pointed bamboos hardened in the fire,

buried with an inch or two showing. They'll pierce the leather sole of your boot and they're often poisoned with aconite."

"What arms've the Kukis got?"

"Muzzle-loading tower muskets of about 1815, bows and arrows, spears and *dhaos*. Arrows are poisoned with aconite too. The *dhao's* the universal chopper of the country. Kukis are a sort of Nagas, but the trouble is their villages are scattered here and there all over the Naga Hills. They're an idle, naked, treacherous and unbelievably dirty crew."

Pause and puff, puff at his old black pipe, his sunburnt face and neck red in the firelight.

"The Kuki story is that God dared the three races to jump from one peak to the other. The Manipuri fell into the stream; between; the Naga dropped a foot in it, but succeeded; the valiant Kuki jumped clear. The Manipuri's very clean; the Kuki never washes and is just lousy and proud of it."

"I s'pose you've killed a good many of them, haven't you?"

"I don't know. One never knows, for their pals take the wounded and their old guns off before you can get at 'em. One jolly seldom captures them. Well, well." A hearty yawn. "You'd better turn in now."

"Tell me. Do you go in for night work in this sort of fighting?"

"No. It's too damn dangerous. Lose your way in these thick jungles and hills and get cut up. No, no. Don't try it. Good night!"

John peered across the moonlit fields to the hillock a mile away about which Grant had won his V. C. thirty years before, employing bluff and stratagem. He gazed at the black cardboard-like profile of the wild hills he was soon to enter and he pondered the advice he had been given.

Could he deceive his enemy like this? He supposed there must be some magic in those horns of flankers of which he, a recruit to the job, knew nothing. Grant had moved by night from Tammu to Thobal. Times had changed; it was "too damn dangerous" now.

He turned in.

At dawn the two columns parted, the one for home and rest in Imphal, the other for solitude, endeavour and the savage green hills.

That night John's column bivouacked at Pallel near the foot of the mountain barrier. The men rammed in a thick carpet of



panjis all about their camp to stop a rush, for only a few riflemen had .303 magazine rifles, the rest had the single-shot Martini, a brute of a thing that kicked one's shoulder off.

Darkness fell and the oppressive atmosphere of those pagan hills seeped out over the plain into the sleeping camp. John shivered with the foreboding of disaster, pulled himself together with an effort, groped for and regained his hatred for these grim head-hunters, lay long awake beneath the moon, and at last slept fitfully with his men. In the twilight of early morning, Gurkhas and laden Nagas stood ready to march.

"Devilish long column in single file on a hill," John thought. "Never mind: nothing'll happen to-day. Political said there was no enemy about here, all friendly villages. Odd sort of cuss that Bengali doctor baboo: white shirt, white dhoti, umbrella. Damn sight too fat, too. Calves that only a cow could take a pride in. He'll die on these hill paths. However, he's the only being I can talk English to for the next month or two."

"Move off!" he called to the Gurkha officer commanding his advanced guard.

Out went the flanking horns the Captain had spoken of, thirty men on each side of the path. In a few minutes the horns had entered the high, thick grass and the dense jungle at the foot of the hills. John, shotgun over his shoulder, followed the advanced guard; the rest of the column came behind him in single file. The silence compassed him about as he passed into the woody aisle on that narrow path. Very, very slowly the column mounted by the winding track. At a clearing a thousand feet up, the Column Commander looked back and saw his rearguard still on the plain two miles away. The column must have been nearly three miles long: three miles of flanks exposed to an enemy to hit where he liked, with only the baggage guards and a few pairs of men that he had, on his own, dispersed throughout the length of the column. The pairs had orders to halt just inside the edge of the jungle, off the path, on equal terms with their enemy.

His column stopped for a rest and he stood, leaning peacefully on his shotgun, looking back over the watery plain of Manipur, set as an emerald in the dark ferocity of its tumbled mountains. Bit by bit, as always to the exile, the tinkle of the little wind in the bamboos, the scutter of the partridge, faded from him; England and its sweet fields and hedgerows flowed over him in a heavy day-dream.

"Crash!" The echo splashed from hill to hill into the blue distance and back again.

He started round towards his advanced guards: his coolies looked up questioningly at him: the riflemen about him knelt up, weapons ready. A minute passed: a runner came from the front and knelt down by him to report. Three men had started up from a dense cane-brake in front of the flankers: Rifleman Chandradhoj had fired, but he was a small man and, facing up the hill, the kick of the Martini had bowled him over backwards. The spears had whistled over his head.

"Advance!"

Slowly again the column crept on and up, the jungle denser and denser, the path winding hither and thither through thick grass along the ridge. John was well up just behind his advanced guard commander. The path now cut along the side of a hill, across the spurs and into the re-entrants.

An hour dragged by, the flankers cutting their way with kukris through the close-matted cane, their whistles, like the cheep of birds in the forest, telling one to the other of his movements. Scalding sun: a light shower of rain on his bare arms: the scalding sun again: both his forearms in one huge water blister, literally boiled by the heat.

Twelve-bore under his arm, he stole round each corner with a section of riflemen before him. As he turned a sharp corner, there was a roar from the opposite spur two hundred yards ahead; great clouds of white smoke in the jungle; a buzzing about his head like bees. Uselessly he fired his choke bore high above the smoke. He heard, among the thunder that cast itself up and down the valley, the staccato belching of his flankers' Martinis ahead of him—another and another roar: greater and more clouds rolling out of the trees and over the path.

The whistles had ceased. Martinis answered muskets. Slugs hummed about him. What *was* happening? Why did no one report?

"Take your platoon up and help the advanced guard," he snapped at the nearest Gurkha N.C.O. "Send me news."

He started to go forward himself with the platoon, then remembered the miles of humanity behind him for which he was responsible. He staggered back between the thick trees: there was a roar in his ear: blinded with smoke he turned again. A flash of steel, a glimpse of red and he shot.

The fight raged before him but he could see nothing: again he turned and then behind he glimpsed the trees and the path; a leaping black figure or two; from the edge of the forest, the bark of muskets and more clouds of smoke. They were in among the coolies; those three miles of useless humanity spattered only too lightly with his Gurkhas. This was disaster: disaster at his first attempt. Disreputable disaster for which Assam was famous; he too had added his count.

He *must* see: he *must* get back control of the situation. Back, back down the three miles the fighting went. He hastened through the smoke, his gun at the ready. Again he fired at a shadow close-by: another flashed across the path and knocked him reeling against the bank. He ran on. The smoke was clearing: less firing: bunches of his men were kneeling by the path facing outwards to right and left, occasionally shooting. Here and there, a bleeding ruin marked his wounded.

At the head of the baggage column he saw the coolies' loads lying helter-skelter about the track and but a few cowering porters to be seen. The baggage was as good as gone. His column could move neither forward nor back.

Disaster . . . . defeat! Night and the headhunters.

His pairs of men in the jungle were still firing and he could see answering clouds of smoke: arrows hissed over but not a Kuki was to be seen on the path. That was one mercy. The day was lost but perhaps he could yet thrash the enemy in front of him so that they would keep away through the night. Once more he made upwards to the fight in front. The smoke hung heavy all about. He fell flat on his face over a soft form—a dead body. He caught hold of its white shirt and rolled it over on its back.

It was the doctor baboo—dead—no, not dead—asleep! He shook him. He was awake and alive but terrified to death, umbrella in hand.

"Get up and do yer job, damn you!"

"Sahib, I cannot; I am greatly afraid."

"Get up! There are wounded in front and behind. Get up!"

"Sahib, may I open my umbrella?"

John, perplexed, "Yes, you fool! Of course you can."

The pallid and trembling baboo sat up, opened his umbrella and held it above him. He picked up his instrument case and his pannier and walked swiftly forward along the path beneath his umbrella. John followed, too worried to smile, collected a dozen riflemen as he went, rounded the corner where he had first

been surprised and into the thick of the affair, the baboo ahead of him. Rusty slugs and arrows swished past like sea-spray, the musketry boomed about them; the Bengali doctor hurried on in front, knelt down by the path with his faithful umbrella and tended the stricken beneath its protection.

The advanced guard commander appeared from the gloom. He and John consulted as they crouched beneath a rocky bank.

"What's happened, Bahadur?"

"It's all right, Sahib. They've got a big stockade just ahead, but Hitman's platoon's got above them by now and they'll go soon. My men are stuck up against the stockade. Ground's sown with *panjis*."

All of a sudden the firing stopped.

"They've gone. Go back, Sahib, and collect those cursed coolies," Bahadur said unconcernedly. "They always bolt when there's a fight. That doctor's a brave man, isn't he? There aren't many people who'd sit out in the open like that being potted at from a few yards."

"Yes. He's got guts," John answered.

He rose and strode back along the path till he came once more to the baggage guard. Here and there Naga coolies were being driven by his men on to the path from out of the woods. He hailed the Gurkha officer commanding his baggage guard. Amar Sing doubled up to him.

"That's the worst attack we've had on the baggage that I know of," he remarked. "Yes, Sahib, we'll get most of the coolies back in about an hour. It was those pairs of men in the jungle who saved us. The enemy bumped them without seeing them and their attack broke up. I've pushed some more pairs in now all the way down the column."

The dresser was attending to the wounded. The doctor baboo came back for stretchers, his umbrella still open above him.

"All right?"

"Yes, Sir: they are none so badly wounded in front. I will now attend to these."

John went forward to the now empty stockade. His men had torn the great logs out from about their path and were pouring through the gap to meet their flanking platoon. Bahadur was getting his flankers out again ready to start the advance. Beyond a scrap or two of rag and a little cooked rice, the enemy

had left no traces; there were no signs of Kuki wounded, no guns. They might never have been there that day. It was just as the captain had said. John cursed himself for fighting his battle so badly.

"What's the time, Sahib?" Bahadur asked. "It'll be dark at seven; we've three miles to go."

For the first time the Column Commander looked at his watch. Half-past three! A six-hour trek before him! No water till he got to Tengnopal; thirsty men, rebellious and thirsty Naga coolies. His heart stopped beating as he heard another shot from far down the baggage column. Then two more. He walked back as fast as he could go. Where was Voya, his Naga interpreter? Fled, he supposed.

Where's Voya?" he shouted to a Gurkha.

The man pointed to a thick patch of high yellow grass at the edge of the jungle.

"Get up!" the Gurkha called.

Voya's pale face appeared above the grass where he had hidden, his neck still blowing in and out with fear, like the gills of a fish. John seized his arm and hustled the unwilling Naga along with him. Everyone seemed so self-possessed and quiet, even the coolies who were now being made to take up their loads again. It seemed that only he was worried. He felt ashamed of his inexperience and inefficiency. The baggage commander met him.

"All ready, Sahib, Two coolies killed by *dhaos*. I've given their loads to others. We've got five wounded men on the stretchers there. Doctor baboo's with them."

In amazement at the comparatively harmless outcome of the trouble, John passed the word up the column to advance, and soon the unwieldy centipede was on its way again. He stalked up to the front and urged on his advanced guard. There was an occasional shot from the forest ahead. Another wounded man claimed attention. Time was flowing by: the sun was declining. The situation was getting desperate. At this pace he could never reach Tengnopal before blind night with all its dangers fell upon him and his struggling column.

He turned a corner in the forest, to be met by three puffs of smoke and a hail of slugs from the spur ahead and above him. Three more puffs and a Gurkha sank beside him with a cough. The doctor, with his umbrella, knelt busily beside the man. A sudden fury took possession of John. This was nonsense, this fatuous flanker business; what a criminal fool was that unimagin-



ative captain who had advised him. He spoke to the Gurkha officer beside him.

"Take No. 2 Platoon up the hill; make a detour and come down on top of that spur and clear it," he ordered. "Quick's hell! I'll call in those wretched flankers so's they don't shoot you."

The platoon crashed off up the hill and was lost. John doubled forward to Bahadur and told him to close his flankers under cover ready to climb the hill and clear the next spur, then called up a third platoon and kept it ready to follow Bahadur to the third spur.

In ten minutes he saw No. 2 Platoon Commander standing on the road ahead, and jogged forward to meet him with the two platoons at his heels. He then sent the three platoons off in a covey up the hill to drop down and clear the next three spurs and so he went on, the advance now going faster and faster as the men got used to this odd way of doing things. Suddenly, half-a-dozen loud Martini reports. Three minutes later a knot of Gurkhas on the path a quarter of a mile ahead signalling him to advance. He and his men ran on. Bahadur met him.

"We came in behind the stockade and got a couple before they could hop it. Here are their guns, Sahib."

He held them up; two blackened blunderbusses of a hundred years gone by.

Half-an-hour before dusk John rounded a corner and saw a thread of water tumbling down the cliff into a shallow pool.

"Tengnopal," said Voya.

"Thank God!" said John.

The long column of porters came up at the trot, anxious to get to safety before dark. John sat by the track and watched them pouring in on to the flat space on the spur near the water.

Already Gurkhas and Nagas were at it; trees were falling right and left; trenches were being dug out and the butts of the great twelve-foot logs were being forced into them and packed tight. In twenty minutes the upper wall of his four-walled stockade stood intact with a mat of *panjis* outside it. He marvelled at the speed of the thing. There is no woodsman to touch the Naga.

As the sun fell behind the jagged western hills, the northern wall stood firm in position. Hurriedly, abatis of thick branches were placed to close the other two sides, piquets were called in and the noisy column settled to cook and chat and rest. The musical Aoh coolies struck up "Onward Christian Soldiers" as a tribute to their high civilisation and to their missionary teacher.

The subaltern sat down on the stretcher that did for bed, poured himself out a glass of beer and stared across the deep, black valley into the red west. He was tired: his nerves were frayed: he had lost a fight and, in an hour or two, one of his wounded would die for certain. All he had were two Kuki guns, poor enough trophies when one came to look at them at close quarters. The captain had said that one never got them, so he'd been a little bit lucky. But perhaps it wasn't all luck. He'd done things a bit differently in order to get them. His thoughts wandered off into the future. He'd got three days up in Tengnopal in order to finish the stockade. On Monday he'd leave Bahadur and his platoon there as a garrison, march back to Pallel that day, and then into the hills near Shuganu. He rebelled against another long, fruitless, wasteful fight. He'd found one simple way of turning the tables on the enemy. There *must* be others. A germ of an idea came to him. Lonely night drew in upon him. The beaten warrior ate little, lay awake long and at last slept deeply.

A loud boom rushed in upon his senses. He jumped from his blankets. It was dawn. What now?

He looked up at a huge belch of grey smoke, stealing through the trees three hundred feet above his camp.

"Take your platoon up and drive them off that ridge," he shouted to a Gurkha officer.

In five minutes they were off. In twenty minutes a runner came back with an evil-smelling blackened tube of bamboo, strapped tight with *mithun* hide, bound with *mithun*-hide thongs. It was a female bamboo of about three inches calibre with the base-piece reinforced with the knot of a male bamboo. And it stank to heaven. It was a Kuki cannon; filled with gunpowder, it had been touched off with a long, dry, smouldering vine by a No. 1 who lay under cover behind another tree in case the cannon burst. John strolled off with his orderly up the hill, to look at the gun position.

"Surprised again," he thought. "I ought to have had that damn thing and its gun-team before ever they fired it off. However, one can't work at night hereabouts. That captain-man said so. But perhaps. . . well, I don't care. As well be hung for a sheep as a lamb. We've been beaten anyhow."

Back in the stockade he sent for his Naga interpreter.

"Voya," he said, "the column marches from here at dawn on Monday. You can tell every Naga and Kuki you see round here

to let the enemy know that I'll have my revenge that day as I pass my column back along the track I've come up."

"Right, Sahib," and Voya shouted the news to two friendly Naga wayfares who were watering at the spring.

Ten minutes later Lieutenant John Griffin sent for his Gurkha officers and spoke to them in a secluded place.

"Tell the men and the coolies that we march for Pallel on Monday. But keep what I'm going to tell you now to yourselves. This is how we march. You, Gamar Singh, will take three platoons off after dark on Sunday night through the forest above the path. You will examine each spur and whenever you find a new stockade facing this way, you'll plant an ambush above it. You will yourself go as far as the fork of the path to Aihang village, where one drops down to Pallel. You will set an ambush there, but you will let all enemy pass through up to about two hours after dawn, for I want the enemy to go right through to man the new stockades to oppose us. There they'll be smashed up by the ambushes you'll have dropped at those places. I will bring the column on from here, leaving at two hours after dawn on Monday. All right?"

"Yes, Sahib. It will be done."

On Sunday evening the three platoons were at work cutting trees in the forest and, at dusk, collected concealed in a hollow. From then till the next day John knew no more of them. That night he slept not at all. He had sent men out on the dangerous and impossible; the old captain had said so.

At 4 a.m. he drank his cup of tea in the dark; the coolies and the one remaining platoon of the column got ready for the day's march. They stood about wondering why their commander sat so long over his breakfast. The sun came up and at seven o'clock he said "Good-bye" to Bahadur whom he was to leave with his platoon to garrison Tengnopal post. In broad daylight he marched at a round three miles an hour with no flankers, no protection except the occasional pair of men as a minute piquet just inside the jungle. As he set out he heard intermittent firing all along down the seven miles to Pallel, echoing across the valleys and on to the hills. Suddenly it stopped.

What a fool he'd been. There was a fight going on. His men must have been caught in the jungle by these wily devils. This was the end. He'd only forty men with him and his three

miles of coolies. He set his teeth for the worst. He took hold of himself to keep from running on ahead with his escort to go to Gamar Singh's help. The suspense was unbearable.

Suddenly he came on a stockade, its logs by the path torn away and thrown down. As he jumped through the gap, pistol in hand, he saw a dead Kuki sprawling by the pathside. Another stockade with a hole torn in it and another and another. Then, at last, five miles from camp, he all at once bumped into Gamar Singh standing with his back to him on the track.

"Thank God!" he burst out. "What's happened? Where are your men?"

The stolid Gurkha slowly related the story to his tantalised master. He had got into position and the enemy had come. Almost unwillingly the tale seemed to come out; it came so deliberately.

Then, "I've got some Kuki guns."

"Where are they?" impatiently.

The Gurkha officer walked steadily ahead of John to a little clearing. There, John looked on a scene he would never forget. A platoon of Gurkhas sitting idly about in the grass. Near them half-a-dozen Kukis, wrists tied with pullthroughs behind their backs. Close by, twenty odd Kuki guns lying dressed by the right on the grass.

"You. . . you got these?" he stammered.

"Yes. I call this fighting. I've had no casualties. That flanker game's just playing with a tiger for fun."

John stood and stared, too confused to speak.

"Come on! You and your men are tired. Let's get to Pallel," he blurted out at last.

A bare hour down the hill as fast as they could march, picking up successful and disappointed ambushes as they went. At ten o'clock they approached Pallel to see the camp already occupied by another column. Gamar Singh looked through his field-glasses at the scene just below. "It's the captain's column. I suppose he's brought out some more ration for our trip round by Shuganu." He grinned. "Usually a Gurkha officer comes out with the rations, but the colonel knows you're new so I suppose he's sent him out to see how we've got on."

John Griffin walked slowly into Pallel, shotgun over his shoulder. He felt abashed, resentful and humble: he'd lost a small fight and won a big one. He knew his captured guns and prisoners would have gone on into camp: that the captain would

have seen them and would have been surprised, perhaps envious. He hung back ostensibly to see his rearguard march in. At last he entered the compound of the one little thatched hut which did for resthouse and for everything else. His mentor rose and greeted him.

"Well, how d'you get on?"

"Oh, all right. Had a rotten time going and lost eight men and two coolies. One of my men died at Tengnopal. Better coming back."

"Never mind, old boy. Come and have some breakfast. How'd you get those prisoners and guns? Been disarming friendlies?"

"No," John replied, "they're enemy prisoners and enemy guns all right."

"Well done! The biggest single haul by far that we've had in this show. There's nothing like that flanker system. I told you it was the safest and best way to move and fight in these parts. We all do it now. I don't suppose the Kukis round here are used to it.

The captain drew the horns on the table-cloth with his fork in deep satisfaction. John gulped down his rage, looked hard at his cup and poured himself out some tea, vowing that he'd see himself to blazing before he ever tried again to move or to fight with those ill-starred horns.

"I—I think we ought to try a bit of night work," he ventured feebly.

"No. Leave that alone. We don't want any of these Assam disasters. We've avoided them so far," came the firm answer.



## THE SORROWS OF MULLA KURBAN ALI

BY MIRZA SAYYID MUHAMMAD ALI KHAN JAMALZADEH

[Translated from the Persian by G. E. W.]

### TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

*It will, of course, be realized by the intelligent reader that many salutary changes have taken place in Iran since Jamalzadeh's book was written. The deeply poetical and mystical nature of the Iranians has, however, changed less than is, perhaps, popularly supposed.*

My name? Kurban Ali, your humble servant. What do I do for a living? Unworthy though I be, I am one who narrates the death of the Prince of Martyrs. My age? God, He alone knoweth. Should I ever return to Sehdeh by Isfahan which is my native place, my Father (may God grant him His abounding mercy) has written with his own hand in the flyleaf of the "zād ul muád" the minute, hour and day of my entry into the world and—but my worthless brother has no doubt by this time sold this too ten times over and spent the money in riotous living. Thou, O God, shalt judge him, the cruel one. However, one way and another I must be fifty years of age. Ah! How swiftly does time pass! Verily, more swiftly than an Arab steed. Look not on my white beard. May God darken the face of the earth when grief and sorrow turn white the blackness of my eye. Ah, how men change! There was a time when men were Moslems and feared God. Now, unbelief has taken possession of the earth. Men cut off the beard given them by God and make themselves in the likeness of women and women wear moustaches to make themselves look like men. Very well, and may not that moustachioed woman who on the Judgment Day shall, from the roofs hurl pestles at the head of the imams (may they be blessed!) be either one of these beardless men with curled moustaches or one of those moustachioed strumpets, may God remove their spawn from the earth. No one remembers now the day when a royal maund of coal-dust could be bought for thirty-five shahis. By the two severed hands of 'Abbas I can well recall the time when a royal maund of the finest bread could be bought for seven shahis. A man with four wives and children who earned fifteen krans or two tomans a month could live like a king. O God! Be Thou merciful to Thy servants. Ah, let the cord of this my shrivelled neck be severed! Oh God! How long

must I stay in this life? Let me die and be at rest. But Thy servant is ungrateful and no servant of thine. O God! Thanks be to God! Thanks be to God a myriad times. Thanks for what Thou hast given and for what Thou hast withheld.

Well, to resume, I returned from my journey to Meshed, the shrine of the venerable Riza, whither I had taken the body of my dead father. When I arrived in Teheran, my money was all exhausted and I was therefore obliged to remain there and took service with an Isfahani "rozakhan." Gradually I began to take up "rozakhani" myself and as I had, by the grace of the Prince of Martyrs, a rich voice, I made brilliant progress. My master in due course died and I took to myself his wife who, besides modesty and chastity, possessed also a house and some slight means. For twenty whole years I gained a livelihood through the Prince of Martyrs. Some weeks I gave as many as ten or fifteen recitals. It is true, I had had no proper education but, by the bounty of the Al-i'Abba, I had a good memory and wit. I remembered an episode as soon as I had heard it once or twice and as time went on I acquired great proficiency in working episodes up to a climax, in anticlimaxes, in prayer and "fatihas,"\* and on such occasions my congregations were moved to no small degree. There was hardly a house where as a result of my lugubrious recitals the noise of weeping was not heard at least once a year.

During Muharram one house in twenty used to raise its awning. Nowadays what has the most prominence is the newspaper which has a wider circulation than the godless wickedness of Satan. . . . But I am digressing from my subject and I have bored you with my rambling. You were asking me how I came to be here in prison and why they have put chains about my withered neck and fetters on this foot, would to God it were stepping towards Hades. It is a long, long story and I fear lest it may be the cause of wearying you. No? Really not? Very well. If you really desire, what harm is there in telling it?

When I had been a rozakhan for some years there came to live in our part of the town a cloth-merchant who was quite the most inoffensive person in the whole quarter. No one had ever heard Haji raise his voice above the normal pitch. Several times on Tuesday evenings, which was the day when the quarter received its water, I chanced to exchange a few words with Haji and it became known to me that he was a pious and God-fearing man. Early in the morning he said his prayers, donned his cloak and

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\*Prayers said at funerals.

went off to his shop. In the afternoon, he cleared up the shop, bought his bread, pulled his cloak over his head and, again saying his prayers, went home. From the time he left home in the morning until his return in the evening the door of his house remained closed. On Thursday evenings Haji again put on his cloak and went off on foot to the shrine of 'Abdul Azim.' By midnight or early morning he returned. He had his key, opened the door and entered. Before noon on Friday, he went to the baths after which he went straight off shopping and then returned home. And no one had ever heard proceeding from his house the sound of revelry or drinking or of wrangling and dispute. Yet all knew that Haji was married and had a family, though it is true that the latter consisted only of one daughter. Now it so befell that one day this daughter got ill. Haji took a vow that if his daughter recovered he would engage a rozakhan and for five months, in the name of the five members of the Family of the Cloak, he would hold a rozakhani in his house. And by the blessing of Abdullah, the son of Hussain, his daughter was cured and as we were his neighbours Haji one day made me undertake to go on Thursday evenings to his house and there narrate The Tragedy.

It was, as I remember clearly, the third week. I had learnt for the first time a fine roza of the marriage of Qassim. Softly and fluently I recited it and then said the prayers for the dead, for the fulfilling of our needs and for the kissing of the threshold of the Holy Shrines. After I had taken tea and smoked a pipe I rose to leave when I heard a pleasant voice behind me which somehow set me all atrembling. "Your Reverence," the voice said.

I turned and saw a figure in a prayer veil and a hand held out to me with a few krans in it. I realized that this was the money for three recitals and that Haji, for luck, had sent his daughter to hand it to me, the Zakir-esh-Shuheda. I held out my hand to take the money. It was trembling strangely. The two krans slipped from my grasp and went rolling towards the courtyard and the garden. The girl bent down. Still stooping, she went after the money to pick it up. All of a sudden her veil caught in a spray of deep red roses and fell away, leaving her head uncovered. She cried out "Woe is me!" and, as she wore no cap and her curls were loose, she tried desperately with her two hands to hide from shame the blossoming fairness of her face. It was as if my eyes had been dazzled by the sun. My heart began to beat furiously. Without waiting for the money I dashed from the house and, once outside, I leant against the wall, faint with

wonder. I stood there for a space in dire distress. At last, by the mercy of my Lord Hussain, I felt better and was able to walk. It was Thursday evening, I had several more recitals arranged and the sun was scarcely set but I was too upset and I went straight home. My wife (May she be united with fair Fatimeh—she was a wife without equal!) saw my condition and said, "You have caught a chill and I must get you some hot herb tea at once."

It was of no avail. I know not why, but my thoughts kept flying to Haji's house, to the rose-tree and to those waving curls.

Well, I know that this was nothing but the whispering of thrice-accursed Satan who would lead astray the thoughts of a servant of Hussain and, on this blessed Thursday night, would banish from the hearts of the disciples of Ali, all thought of his martyred son. Yet, however much I called down the wrath of God on Satan's head, all was useless.

"Do you know Haji, the cloth-merchant's wife?" I asked my wife (May the Lord make her of the company of the Noblest of Women! I never saw her like).

"Two or three months ago," she said, "When Haji received news that his brother had died in Kerbela, he held a "fatiha" and I went in neighbourly fashion to offer my condolences. That was the first time I saw Haji's wife. I have seen her once since at the baths.

"What is his daughter like?" I asked.

"What next?" said my wife in astonishment, "What business is it of yours? How can it affect you whether I know Haji's wife and daughter or not? You, who neglect your recitals and come loafing round the house and plaguing me."

"Wife," I said, "You know as well as I that Haji has engaged me for five months on account of his daughter's recovery. I want to know how old she is, so that I may know whether to take Sughra or Sakineh or Shahrbanu or the Marriage of Kassim as the subject of my recitals."

"The Marriage of Kassim will be the best, then," said my wife, "for she must be sixteen and, Mashallah, Mashallah, she is as fair as a moon that shines in Haji's house."

"It matters nothing to me," I replied, "Whether she is a moon or the smallest star." And again the rose-tree and those wanton locks appeared before my eyes and a bitter sigh came from the bottom of my heart.

My wife (God bless her! She was pure and chaste from head to foot) noticed how I was affected and she was not pleased. She

hurried through her prayers, ate our humble repast of bread, cheese and grapes, blew all round her, and, muttering a charm against snakes and scorpions, went to sleep. But no sleep came to me, for my heart was in a turmoil.

It was a still moonlight night. Two cats had been squalling on the roof the whole evening and showed no signs of stopping. My wife (May she find rest with Fatimeh, the Chaste and Loyal Spouse! She was the purest of all women), just as she was dropping off to sleep and without opening her eyes, muttered: "Spring's here and the cats are about again." This mention of the spring took my thoughts again to the rose-bush and those rebellious curls and this time, God forgive me, I recalled that beneath those curls had been a face which blushed like the petals of that same rose-tree which out of jealousy had torn the veil from the maiden's head and had driven a thorn of grief into my heart. That heart now began to beat so violently that I feared the noise would arouse my wife to pour abuse on me (May she be united with Fatimeh! She was without peer or equal). But no, the day's toil and her household work had tired her out and she was oblivious of everything. Not even a house full of drums could have awoken her.

In a word, I could not sleep and not even the Taubeh verse from the Quran, nor the prayer for sleep which I learned in my childhood could bring sleep to me. I was at my wit's end and at last I got out of bed, slipped on a shirt and a pair of loose trousers and with bare head and feet went up the stairs on to the roof. The neighbours were wrapped in slumber and no sound issued from them. The earth was bathed in moonlight and the walls and roofs looked as if they had been silvered over and shone out, white as milk. The dome of the Shah Mosque stood out in the distance like an egg, and the minarets seemed like two fingers which grasped it. One of the two cats slipped between my feet and disappeared. Every now and then, from afar off, came the gentle rustle of a breeze. A tipsy reveller came round the corner of the street and I remember how he bawled out in his raucous voice:

*"It's a moonlight night and the clouds are flying.*

*"Gather round, lads, and drink again!"*

The world seemed enchanted and a feeling of well-being began to steal over me when suddenly a cry of "O God hearken unto me, put an end to my musings." At this sound of the watchman's voice a small child in one of the neighbouring houses awoke



and began to cry and babble. I could hear the voice of its mother now crooning and cajoling, now scolding and abusing. As if to complete the tale, the dogs in the little bazaar below came to life and raised an endless storm of howling and barking. Aroused from my reverie, I saw that I was hidden behind a broken-down eave on the roof of Haji's house and that by looking through the gutter-hole I was, as it were, inside a stranger's abode. My eyes were staring into a room and on to a white bed, where lay a sleeping maiden, her tumbled locks lying in disarray on the pillow. I remember how I softly whispered a verse I was wont to use with much effect in my recitals:

*"Thine eyes, enjoying sleep denied to all*

*"Mankind for love of thee, hold me in thrall."*

I stood amazed at my madness and breathed some prayers for forgiveness. Then, just as I was, in shirt and trousers and with bare head and feet I passed through the beams and rafters and returned to my own house. I found my poor wife running hither and thither and crying out: "Mulla, Mulla, what has befallen you?"

"You foolish woman," I said (May Hussein, the fifth of the Family of the Cloak, intercede for her! She was a very jewel of a woman) "What is wrong with you that you wake the neighbours with your shrieks? I only went up to the roof to say my night prayer in the moonlight and to return thanks to God."

"You and your night prayer!" she muttered. She got into bed, drew the quilt over her head and uttered not another sound. I too went to my couch thinking that I might be able to sleep, but once again the image of that white bed came to my mind, the rose-tree, those waving curls, that flowerlike face and again I was rent with excitement.

Well, to cut a long story short, I could no longer bring myself to leave the house. My health began rapidly to leave me. My wife grew ill with jealousy. Gradually we sold all our belongings. Of all my weekly engagements for recitals the only one I kept on was the one in Haji's house and that only because it was so near. My wife's illness became worse and worse and early one morning she left this transitory life for the world to come and thus all her sorrow and anger ended. God forgive her, she was without a peer! From that day, I was alone—quite, quite alone.

When nothing whatever was left of my furniture and household effects I mortgaged half my house to the corn Chandler of the quarter—a man to outward appearances holy and pious, but who

was a hypocrite whose idea of interest was one kran and ten shahis in the toman though he was commonly believed to be a reputable dealer in barley and wheat. By this mortgage I received three hundred tomans which paid my debts to the doctor, the chemist and the undertaker. With what was left over I eked out a precarious existence.

One night I was lying in my room in the depths of despair, and was saying, by chance, the verse,

*"By day my shadow is my only friend*

*"And that, too, fails me at the dark day's end."*

And in very truth, I wept as I thought of my loneliness when suddenly there was a great knocking at the door. I was much surprised and wondered who could have come to see me at that late hour of night. I dried my eyes and went to the door to find Haji standing there.

"Your Reverence," he said, "Gauhar Khanum's illness has returned and her mother is distraught. I have come to ask if you will come to-night to our house and pray. Perhaps at the sound of your voice God will again cure her." I agreed to go and, closing the door, made to go back to my room but my strength failed me and I sank sobbing on to the stairs. I turned my face to the dark sky and began in spite of myself to pour forth a stream of hate and abuse. Many blasphemous words were on my tongue (would I had been dumb!), each one of which merited a thousand years of hell-fire. God knows it was not my fault; anyone in such a case would have turned to heresy.

I remember how these words came to my lips: "O Thou, Whose existence I can neither affirm nor deny, Who hast created these stars that like a myriad of goggling, ogling eyes continually count the tears of unhappy man, winking scornfully at each other the while. Night after night they reappear to begin again their impudent prying. If this is the only purpose for which Thou didst create Heaven, Earth and Man, why, it is all a farce! O God of Kerbela Who didst create Imam Hussein, why didst Thou also create Zal Joshan? Thou who knowest that the talons of the falcon are as sharp as the dagger, why hast Thou made the sparrow with a body so delicate? If Thou dost approve of tyranny and power, why hast Thou sent prophet after prophet to the earth to perform good works? Thou who knowest how susceptible is the heart of a rozakhan, why didst Thou give to Haji's daughter those locks and those cheeks and then for no reason bring suffering to her fair body? Is this Thy reward for thirty years spent in recounting

The Tragedy? Dost Thou not regret that Thou didst not place that money firmly in my palm? What use was there in throwing two krans to the ground from the hand of an innocent maiden and why didst Thou deliver her veil to the thorn and thus darken my destiny? Thou hast taken from me my peerless wife and now, when Thou wouldst that my tears turn to blood, Thou hast again brought the maiden to a bed of sickness. Ah, Thou hast filled my cup of sorrow too full."

Yes, God have mercy upon me, torrents of such gibberish did I pour forth. It was but the ravings of a wandering mind and I know that God will forgive me. Thus I passed the whole night, sometimes in prayer and supplication, sometimes in reproach and contumely. When morning came I drew on my cloak and left the house in the hope of hearing some news of the sufferer. I saw the doctor's mule standing in front of Haji's house and the doctor's servant dozing on the bench with the bridle in his hand. Gently I awoke him and said, "Brother, do you know how the sick one fares?" He looked at me angrily. "You must be ill yourself, your Reverence," he said, "to wake a man up and ask how the sick one fares. Use your commonsense. If she were well, what would the doctor be doing in the house at crack of dawn?"

I saw that the fellow was right. Ashamed and sick at heart I returned home and locked myself in. That door should never open again except to the undertaker when he came to bear away my corpse for burial. I remember how I recounted The Tragedy to myself, how I wept and how I prayed for the life of Haji's daughter.

The day passed as before and not a drop of water nor a morsel of bread passed my lips. When night came I performed my ablutions and said my evening prayer, but I saw it was all of no avail and that soon I should go mad. I untied the clothes line which had one end tied to a withered mulberry tree at the corner of the house and the other to a peg stuck in the stable wall, and made it fast to a bough of the mulberry tree. I made a noose in the other end and started to put it round my neck, murmuring "We are of God and unto Him do we return." I would end this life of mental agony. Suddenly a voice was raised in the house. I kept silent but then I recognized the voice of Haji crying, Mulla Kurban Ali, Mulla Kurban Ali." Involuntarily, I leapt towards the door and opened it; ah, would that I had never done so! I heard that cruel Fate had plucked that newly opened

flower from the branch of life and that Haji was come to ask me to read the Quran over the body of his daughter, cut off in the prime of her youth. Her body had just been laid in the mosque and was to be buried the next day. I tried to tell him that I could not read but no sound came from my lips and Haji took my silence for consent. He went away and again I was left alone.

The moon shone with an eerie light and a soft breeze was blowing which swung the rope hanging from the mulberry tree slowly backward and forward. Its shadow on the ground seemed to me like the pendulum of a clock which was counting out the hours of life and death, and I fell to thinking of that moonlight night when I had first seen the face of Haji's daughter and the rose-tree and those tumbling curls. A sigh broke from my lips and I cried, "Come what may, I must once more behold that face a thousand times more fair than the moon." I threw over my shoulders the cloak that my wife (May God unite her with Fatimeh on the Day of Resurrection! There never was her like) had mended a hundred times and went to the mosque. Ah! You must understand to what a pass I had come. May God never visit such sorrows on another of His servants. At first, I stood silent and transfixed like a corpse for I could not believe that that slender body I had once seen now lay lifeless beneath this prayer veil and would to-morrow be buried beneath the sod. Then I remembered that it was to read the Quran that I had come there and I began to murmur prayers and passages which I had learnt by heart from the Quran though I could not read it. But my tears flowed too fast.

As God knows, the night was far advanced; no sound came from without. Sorrow and grief had made me mad. I began to recite indiscriminately all the verses of the Quran that I knew, but my weak voice was no longer supported by my gestures. I felt I should die on the very spot and my plight was worse than I can describe. Suddenly, quite close the sound of the evening prayer rose in the night air and this verse fell on my ear:

*"Arise, for night is fall'n so dear to lovers,*

*"And round the Beloved's porch the fond swain hovers."*

These lines so stirred my spirit that I sprang up as though I had received a new lease of life and cried, "Why, oh unhappy one, dost Thou not arise? How canst Thou be dead?"

I had to see that face again and involuntarily I put forth my hand and turned back the prayer veil, and the maiden's face with

its smiling mouth and tumbled locks was uncovered. I bent down, closed my eyes and pressed my lips to hers, to her mouth now like a faded rose-bud.

What happened then I know not. I felt a violent blow in my hinder part and lost consciousness. When I came to my senses I lay in a dark place with shackles on my hands and a chain around my neck. It appeared that the police patrol was going round the mosque when they saw a light in the shabistan where dead bodies lie awaiting burial. Thinking that some knave had come to pilfer a rug or some straw matting, they had come stealthily in, had seen what was happening and, after beating me cruelly, had bound me hand-and-foot and had dragged me outside with my turban round my neck. My beard was cut off, I was beaten with sticks and thrust into prison where, as you see, I still am. Nevertheless, no day passes but that rose-tree, those wanton curls and that smiling mouth take shape in my mind and I live again. But I have wearied you with my tale. Forgive me. It is now seven years since I spoke with living man.



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### MESSES AND CLUBS

SIR,

"Balu" has certainly struck a blow for freedom and you, Sir, have undoubtedly performed a meritorious act in facilitating the ventilation of a long-standing grouse. Mess life is certainly not what it was. Hitherto the public discussion of such a topic savoured of sacrilege and "Balu" has earned the praise due to a pioneer. Pioneers also invite criticism. I offer mine with the hope that it may be constructive. Within limits I consider that it is constructive and possibly not too biased one way or the other. I who am married was once a bachelor. I was, moreover, often that poor wight—the Mess Secretary.

The general impression gathered from Balu's article occasioned the thought that they ask for bread and he offers them a stone. He boldly says "scrap the Mess"—but what is the substitute? "Balu" suggests the hotel, residential club or "chummery." The residential club sounds very attractive and the chummery even more so, but surely not the hotel! Has "Balu" lived for long in the hotel of a small station?

Putting aside the minor point of comparison between the "bare barrack of a room" of old and the boudoir of the modern subaltern, I would suggest that this is a matter of taste and not a fundamental argument against the Mess. "Balu's" main objections fall under two heads. Firstly, he objects to the atmosphere and secondly to the expenses of the Mess.

As to the first, it is for consideration if that indefinable thing "atmosphere" would change in a club or a chummery. In the hotel or residential club it is probably true that you do not necessarily have to pay such attention to rank *per se* or to the weighty matter of precedence of entry to the dining room. The fact remains, however, that the senior usually attains to a certain precedence anywhere and heaven help the junior who disputes the fact: you can't shout against thunder! *Primus inter pares* holds good among juniors as among seniors when it comes to who goes first. That rule applies in one's own home in all walks of life.

It is stated that many young officers rush into early matrimony because they are fed up with Mess life and want a home they can call their own. Hardly a compliment to the lady of their choice!

One suspects that the attractions of the chosen one should be the more positive incentive. Moreover, the alleged saving to be effected by not living in Mess will not finance the more expensive institution of matrimony, not on a subaltern's pay at any rate.

A further consideration, however, prompts the suggestion that living in Mess for a part of their lives is entirely desirable for all young Army Officers. Prussian discipline and old-fashioned etiquette are not essential or desirable but a certain minimum of ordered existence will do much to fit the youngster to take his place among his fellows and to smooth rough surfaces and remove corners. Slippered ease with beer and sandwiches in his room with the wireless going may be very desirable as an occasional change from dining in Mess but, like many other things which are pleasant, it is not always the best.

Now as to the second part of the objection, the main one, that of expense. The subscriptions undoubtedly vary considerably and there could be no objection to abolishing the monthly "Mess Subscription," at present levied by order, also the conditions on promotion should go; subscriptions should then be charged to cover actual needs which must be made to suit the modern times we live in. These overhead costs have to be met equally in the club, chummery or hotel as in a Mess and they are generally higher even though they may be hidden in the "inclusive charges." Papers and the illustrated magazines, etc., cost the same in any case but the more numerous the contributors, the lower the cost per capita. Again, furniture in a chummery will cost more to hire than in a Mess of even a small unit. In the case of the chummery there also arises the snag that absence on the inevitable courses for young officers, leave periods, etc., mean that the chummery will often be occupied by only one or two fellows. They still have to pay the same wages and overhead charges.

The club or hotel must also regulate its charges to provide for such incidental absences. They cannot be philanthropic institutions. Again the smaller stations that are alluded to by "Balu" are rarely able to contemplate the building and equipping of quarters at an economical rate to accommodate more than a fraction of the numbers who might use them. How are they to be financed when, as often happens, the station is emptied by a frontier campaign?

Entertainment is probably the most expensive item and on this topic there may not be general agreement. Is the present scale of entertaining—even in 1940—necessary? This becomes

very much a personal question and everyone must cut his coat according to his cloth. The average monthly bill for drinks is a pretty large one; "Balu" alludes to it without comment. I have no hesitation in saying that it could stand a very large and health-giving cut in the case of senior and junior alike. Few would lament the passing of the small club with its demoralising rounds of unnecessary drinks. Retain the "Gymkhana" club for your polo, tennis and squash courts and the golf course by all means but scrap the bar side of the club. It is a confession of weakness that its existence is dependent on drink profits. Entertain in your Mess as you would in your own home. Reform the Mess—make it more human where necessary—and make it more of a social centre. By all means cut out the heavy formal entertaining of past days and run it on far simpler lines. It has been done and is still being done by many Regiments. I would, however, suggest that an institution which has weathered many storms since it was first established in 1856 (in the Bengal Army) to meet a very pressing need may still have some value for the present generation.

Yours, etc.,  
H. R. K. GIBBS.

## REVIEWS

## "TURKESTAN TUMULT"

BY AITCHEN K. WU.

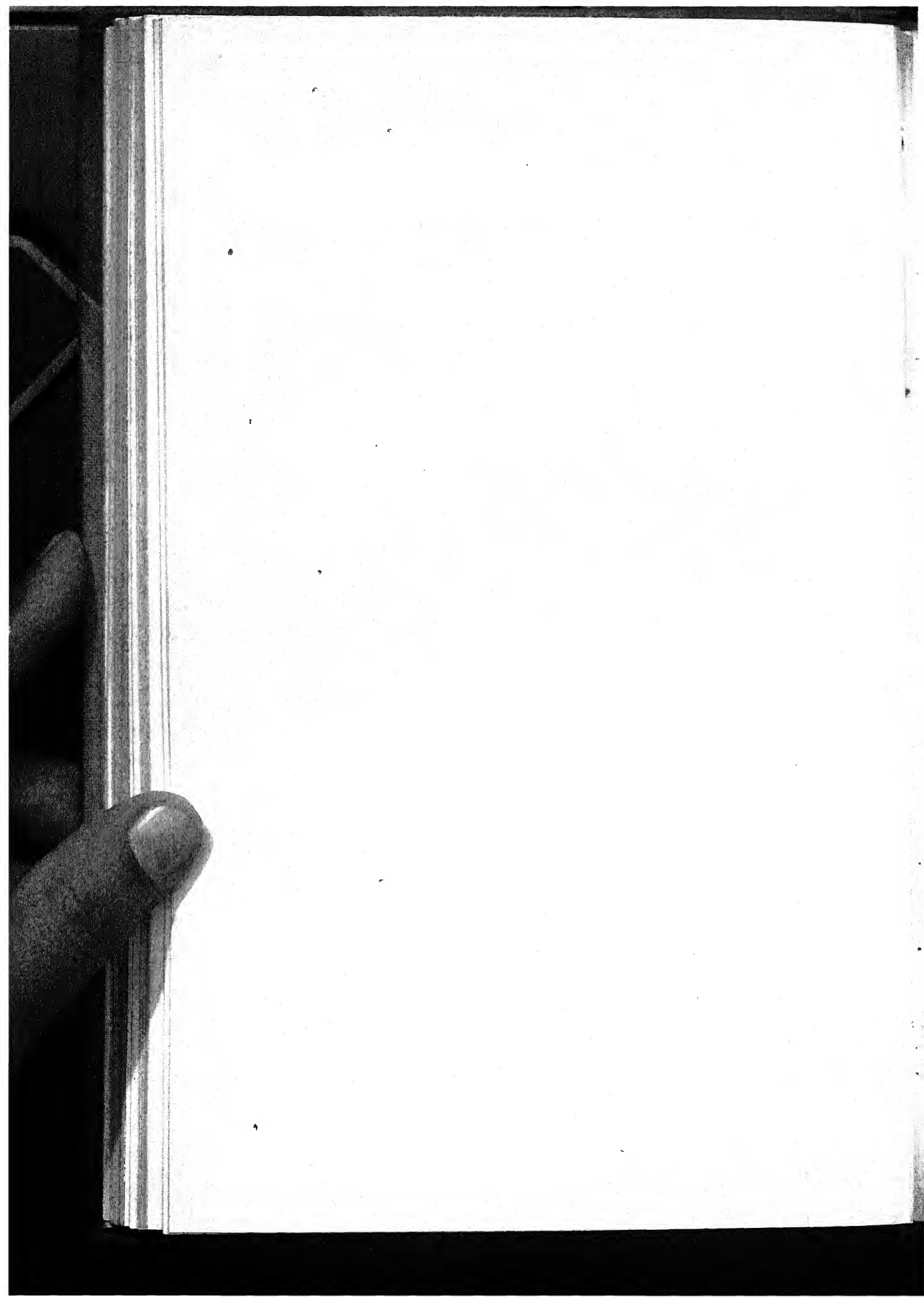
(METHUEN. 12/6.)

Mr. Wu Ai Chen, or as he prefers to Westernise his name, Mr. Aitchen K. Wu, was sent to Urumchi by the Chinese Government after the Manchurian "incident" in 1932 in an endeavour to improve the relations between the Kuo-min-tang and the provincial government of Sinkiang. How this difficult mission was accomplished and the incredible adventures which befell Mr. Wu and his party in this inaccessible corner of Asia make "Turkestan Tumult" not only an exciting story but also a valuable contribution to history.

The book describes the frequent *coups d'etat* which harass the provincial government and devastate the country. For the most part these savage upheavals are caused by the religious fanaticism of the Moslems or Tungans, under the leadership of "Big Horse," a sinister and terrifying figure, who is eventually defeated, after the siege of Urumchi, by Governor Chin Shu-jen, and disappears into Soviet Russia.

The final chapter is devoted to a review of the future of Sinkiang, which Mr. Wu is inclined to view with optimism, provided the Chinese can rule justly the fourteen different races which comprise the population, and communications with the outside world can be kept open by regular airlines. He stresses the necessity for more direct contact between the central and provincial governments and points out that it is in the interests of Great Britain to help in maintaining Chinese integrity in Sinkiang as a means of counteracting Soviet influence and preventing the spread of communism into India.

G. A. S.





## EDITORIAL

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Comment upon modern war is an occupation of singular difficulty because it demands an orientation of mind, and in war-time mental horizons are given to few. Even the bare recording of fact is an enterprise not lightly to be undertaken nowadays. In the wars of the past news was rare and dispatches enjoyed a remarkable prestige; nowadays news is everywhere and the mind is battered by an innumerable army of facts, and in addition directed or misdirected by a volume of conjecture and speculation. Comment or record therefore must perhaps yield to impression.

The first quarter of 1941 has produced events which are sufficiently astonishing. Most in the eye of the world perhaps has been the series of victories gained by British forces in Cirenaica, Libya and Abyssinia. The general story of these victories is familiar to all; the details as yet can be known only to the few. What emerges from the general picture as presented to us is that new methods of war are firmly rooted in old principles. Surprise, economy of force, offensive action, the acceptance of calculated risks—many phrases which in peace seemed so dull in the pages of military manuals, or which in preparing for war amidst peace conditions seem too obvious to demand detailed thought, take on now a life and force which should convince the dullest of their importance. Thought is everyone's business because upon thought depends intelligent and living training. For an example of the results of training no one need look further than Egypt or Abyssinia.

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We are almost too far from Europe, too much removed from opportunity of weighing the evidence to form any opinion of what may be happening there. The German attempt to invade England has not yet begun though the spokesmen of His Majesty's Government continue to place it before the public as an ever-present possibility. Germany has subdued a Balkan country and has been resisted, short of appeal to arms at the moment of writing, by Yugo-Slavia.

Germany

In her example alone Yugo-Slavia has deserved well of a battered Europe.

"Drang nach Osten" has long been a cliché of every survey of German policy during the early years of this century. It now appears possible that this cliché may become a strategic fact. If this should happen Russia's attitude is a matter for speculation. This word is used advisedly. Someone has spoken of the long winter of Russia's dark internal policy, and her foreign policy shows no summer clearness. Two speculations however may perhaps be made. The first is that Bolshevism and Nazism have nothing more in common than a superficial similarity of method. The second entails an anecdote. It was over a Black Sea question that Princess Lieven—according to Creevey—singularly failed to teach Metternich to talk Greek. It appears unlikely that Hitler, less talented than that charming lady though perhaps as loquacious, will succeed in teaching Stalin to talk German should a similar subject enter the conversation.

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The position of Italy is peculiar in the extreme. There seems to be little doubt that the morale of her people is deteriorating but it is premature to expect any general collapse as long as there is any hope that Germany can restore the situation. It is reasonable to suppose, too, that Italian morale has received or will receive a stimulant (though scarcely a tonic) from the Gestapo. Italy at the moment seems to have sunk into a position of complete subservience to Germany. Her much-boasted colonial empire now seems to await a tawdry Gibbon; her troops in Greece suffer continuous defeat; one action with the Royal Navy has resulted in bitter losses to her fleet. It seems that only considerable military successes can bolster up Italian morale to the point of becoming an effective ally to Germany. Where their successes are to be sought is probably a matter of profound importance to Mussolini and a considerable factor in German planning for the late spring and summer.

Italy

It appears now that a certain number of German armoured units have arrived in Tripolitania. It is reported that large numbers of Germans have entered French North Africa. These happenings open an interesting field for speculation. To reinforce weakness is an un-Germanic proceeding, and yet the Mediterranean and the shores around it may yet be the decisive theatre of this war. The deciding factor may yet be sea-power.

\* \* \* \*

Before the outbreak of the present war there was much argument concerning sea-power. The development of air forces, some argued, had changed all that. Some pinned their faith upon capital ships and some upon light craft; disputes raged, and on the subject of cruisers alone a whole literature was written.

The course of events in the present war has somewhat confounded the prophets who foretold the passing of sea-power based upon the heavy surface ship. Yet while the heavy surface ship still remains the pre-dominant element in sea-power our views concerning that conception have broadened. Sea-power means command of the sea, and that phrase means that he who possesses command of the sea may use it as a route for his armies and his trade and deny its use to the enemy. To do this demands supremacy not only on the surface of the sea, but also under the waters and in the air above them. It is this triple aspect of the meaning of sea-power that demands careful thought and it is this which makes so complex that particular phase of naval warfare upon which the Empire entered last February, and which has been called the Battle of the Atlantic.

The Prime Minister drew attention to the vital importance of the result of this conflict. That it will be successful none can doubt. That its successful issue may be the foundation upon which future great land offensives may be built is a legitimate forecast. And finally the course and methods of this long naval campaign may furnish a future Mahan with the point of departure for a fresh book upon sea-power and its relation to history.

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The passing of the Lease and Lend Bill may have incalculable consequences. Its passing was an astonishing demonstration of the fact that in America Government, Opposition and the mass of the people have decided that the cause of the Empire and her Allies is also theirs. It means that the U.S.A. has decided to accept the risk of being drawn into war. Few things show more clearly the importance of this action by the U.S.A. than Axis reactions. These admit the enormous aid which America now offers to the Democracies; they also claim that this aid will come too late. The conclusion is that the Axis fears that American aid may be decisive. This fear may powerfully influence German strategy towards attempting all means to force a quick decision.

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That the review pages in this issue of the Journal have shrunk to one indicates that books are now slower in reaching India and that reviewers, amidst a press of other business, have little leisure for reading. Yet the fact that new books are rarer should only set us searching again amongst the old, and the fact that leisure is rare should not encourage us to discard books altogether.

Reading indeed has a peculiar importance for those who are training for war. Training itself draws its most real vitality from the imagination, and imagination is best stimulated by experience or reading. Experience is not the portion of every one, and so military reading is of great importance. It is therefore the more unfortunate that military reading should often be so uncommonly dull.

That this is so is perhaps the fault of our approach. A desire to study the thoughts and doings of "Great Captains" so often leads to vast compilations of fact, written in many volumes, and apparently with a pen of lead. There is, however, an alternative and that is to forsake the Great Captains for a time in favour of the lesser Captains who served them, and whose knapsacks very often held surprisingly fluent pens if no Marshals' batons. The diarists of many wars are full of valuable material: descriptions of minor affrays, of administrative successes and failures, and of the atmosphere of war. They date, but they are valuable for while methods of war change, war and its chief instrument, the human being, change very little.

The diarists and novelists of the last war are familiar enough. It is perhaps in earlier wars that research pays best. The diaries and journals of Sir Harry Smith, of Kincaid of the Rifle Brigade, of Harris, and of Sergeant Bourgoyne are in most libraries. They are full of interest, and lead on to the campaigns of the Peninsular War. That campaign has nowadays a peculiar interest since the European situation at that time so strongly resembled that which confronts us to-day.

Other campaigns, which produced diarists whose works are fairly readily available, were those of Marlborough. To read of Marlborough's wars may seem to some to be unnecessary antiquarianism. Yet the methods of Marlborough have a great relevance to the situations of to-day. Strong places and flanks have re-appeared in Warfare, and Marlborough's methods of basing highly mobile manoeuvre upon strong points, and of besieging or turning those of the enemy have a strangely modern application.

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The Far Eastern crisis has for the moment died down, and tension has to some extent relaxed. It should not, however, be assumed that the Japanese have abandoned their ambitions in the Far East. The reinforcement of British land and air forces in Burma and Malaya has left no doubt as to the attitude of Great Britain. It must now be clear to the Japanese leaders that Great Britain will fight if necessary, and has the means to do so. The realisation of this fact must give them food for thought. Not even the most ardent exponent of the new order in Asia can be blind to the fact that Japan is in no position to undertake an attack on British possessions in the Far East, with the added possibility of armed American intervention. Economically Japan is in a poor condition; the China War is by no means finished. The question must also arise in Japanese minds as to how far she is allowing herself to be used by Germany. The promised invasion of England has not yet materialised and the days of the Italian Empire are numbered. Perhaps Mr. Matsuoka has gone to Berlin to discuss these questions with the senior Axis partner. In any case whatever decisions are reached, an attempt at a "lightning blitz" against Singapore would seem now to be impossible, and on the other hand a deliberately staged attack on Burma after the occupation of Thailand would require large forces, and it is questionable whether these are immediately available.

During the last three months interest in the Far East has centred round the territorial dispute between Thailand and French Indo-China. The available French forces were unable to prevent the Thais from crossing the frontiers and Japanese mediation has finally imposed a solution on both sides, which contrary to all expectations, favours Indo-China. Whether the Japanese are "keeping something up their sleeve" remains to be seen, but it is difficult to believe that there is no ulterior motive behind this arbitrary settlement of the dispute.

Plans for British and American aid to China have gone forward. Mr. Matsuoka has hinted that this may lead to Japan invoking the third clause of the Tripartite Pact, which would automatically bring her into the war. This is probably bluff, but the fact should not be disregarded that the inability of the Japanese Army and Navy to terminate the China "incident" is an extremely sore point which, if irritated might lead to a situation where the extremists would obtain control, and in their rage turn on those who are supporting their bitterest enemy.



### The Articles in this Number

"PERSIAN TWILIGHT"—Verlaine wrote a poem containing the lines; "If fit entiere La Campagne l'Egypte. Austerlitz, Iéna le Virent."

John Holland, it appears, has seen Persia amidst other theatres of war. He remembers, describes, reflects and comments.

"THOSE ILL-STARRED HORNS"—Refer to the Journal for January, 1941, Page 74, and balance the arguments.

"FINANCIAL RAMBLINGS IN RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT"—Policy was described by a 19th Century English Statesman as blackmail levied by a fool upon the unforeseen. Our contributor, in terms of domestic finance, disproves this statement.

"COMMISSIONS FROM THE RANKS"—A singular illustration of the Napoleonic principle "La Carrière ouvert aux talents."

"LEARNING HINDUSTANI"—An article which should be useful to many and interest all.

"A BLIND MAN SAT DOWN"—A story which has a beginning, an ending, a moral and much acute observation.

"CAIRO CONVERSATION"—"Malbrouch S'en va-t-en guerre." First impressions.

"BURMESE DAYS"—The author says, "the country and people are among the most fascinating I have ever seen." One may well believe him.

"O'REGAN AT WAR"—Further experiences of a character with whom readers will be familiar.

"FLOATING DOWN THE INDUS"—A Suggestion for Ten Days' Leave.

## PERSIAN TWILIGHT

BY JOHN HELLAND

The horizon boiled and trembled up in heat to the wan skies: the mirage, like a lake of purest blue water, dragged the parched traveller ever forward, forward to nothing; the scalded train gasped to uneasy rest beside the mud walls of Khaniqin. Passengers, faces grey with dust, hands grimed with soot, dropped from the train, turned their strained eyes to the hills and scanned the white road to Russia slapped down, it seemed, by the Great Provider, on the close-bitten grass of those Persian hills.

It was 1920; Persia was then a virgin field to us British for exploration. So the passengers were merchants and railway experts seeking concessions, with but one soldier, a British Captain, who stood now, on the border of Mesopotamia and Persia, gazing thoughtfully at the road, wondering how the little army fared as it dangled and swayed hither and thither about the Caspian at the end of that five hundred miles, that tenuous thread of road.

Our Captain spent a few days at Khaniqin, in tents dug four feet deep down into sandy earth, to escape the searing heat of May in Iraq, among clouds of flies and mosquitoes, and in company with snakes. He heard talk of concessions for a railway from Khaniqin, to scar across and across the faces of the mountain ranges, to dash straight along the plateaux and to drop into ancient Teheran. The speakers seemed to him callow: he wondered whether their serious purpose would outlast the climate and outface the wily, dilatory East. He pondered vaguely whether concessions depended on prestige and, if they did, then on what did prestige depend? He had an idea that money could not buy it, for he had seen a good deal of the wealth of the East to which no honour was paid. It seemed to him that with a nation, as with a man, respect was paid to honesty of aim and to the will and the power to achieve that aim.

Would these railwaymen get their concessions?

At 4-30 one morning he assembled a small band of odds and ends of British soldiers, signallers and mortar gunners, before a convoy of four lorries. He told them what to do if the Kurds descended on them to loot and kill. About all they could do was to

jump out, if they got the chance, and shoot—and, finally, be killed; but this last eventuality did not occur to them. It seldom does occur to a soldier as long as his belly is full and he has a football in his kit.

The lorries chugged slowly along the ribbon of road for a few miles over grassy downland towards the hills. The curse of day, the sun, rose and scorched the hoods and sides of the vehicles. After many halts to cool, the convoy reached the foot of the Paitak Pass. Ahead, the jagged hills rose sharply up before it.

With a loud, challenging roar the gallant old Peerless lorries charged at the newly-made, stony track, their solid tyres crashing from rock to rock. Soon, like ants on the hillside, they were seeking their way back and forth on the slow, zigzag climb up the the first giant's stride on to the first great plateau of Persia.

To the Commander of the little convoy, the whole world lay behind, and nothing before. He felt that, once over this steep scarp with the flat, glittering deserts of Arabia hidden from him, he would have no more concern with humanity than have the inhabitants of the Moon. The air-castles of a British-Indian Army stood about the Caspian: unknown and unimagined creatures were all around in the vast hills and between his four lorries and those castles.

The road was wobbly, with large boulders sticking up out of its gritty surface; the lorries clattered and jerked till his teeth nearly fell out and the constant din almost deafened him. At last the convoy stopped at the top of the pass where, in the shade, there still lay a streak of winter's snow. The men plunged their hot arms shoulder-deep into it.

Onwards they bounced and jerked into Karind, a sparse enough, solitary enough little place, but in a glorious setting.

Looking over the grassy plains from Karind through a gorge in the black hills, the soldier gazed raptly at the Koh-i-Noor, sparkling white in its cloth of snow, immense, symmetrical and immaculate. It had revealed itself suddenly and he had gasped with surprise just as he had gasped at his first sight of the Taj Mahal through its big, red archway.

As day followed day, the little party chugged steadily forward, meeting here and there with a friendly welcome from a few British and Indian soldiers in small posts on the Lines of Communication. Bumping along the hard road, they came upon Kermanshah, menaced by a great black crag of a mountain, but a cool, fresh spot: white and green poplars rustling and winking like sequins in the

breeze: yellow roses all about: little streams hung with green, grassy banks and tortoises flopping in and out of the crystal water.

"And this delightful herb whose tender green  
Fledges the river's lip on which we lean. . . ."

In the bazar, the shopkeepers in their gloomy shops looked hardly earthly from the contrasted pallor of their opium-dried faces. The felt hat trade was flourishing: everywhere men were pounding the loathsome seeming mass of liquid felt into stone or wooden moulds. I do not suppose that that trade goes on now with Shah Reza Khan's new orders for the people's headdress, unless the always unruly Kurds still wear their big, top-heavy, full-bellied black felts.

He stood before the great dark rock at Bisithun where Darius commemorates for ever, to eternal shame, his devilish cruelty, by having carved thereon his own brutal effigy and, before it, the figures of twelve kings, whose eyes he had caused to be put out. Darius, in his pride, set up a memorial so that all ages might wonder at his power: to this British soldier, Darius, of whom he had known but little before, had blackened his fame as a warrior by wanton cruelty to helpless prisoners. Only that had the carving at Bisithun achieved: only that will it ever now achieve, the revenge of blinded kings.

Piercing the next high range through the Aveh Pass they ran into Ab-i-garm, place of warm waters. Then on and on to Hamadan, much like Kermanshah, but in more open country. Here the gold dust glittered in the rills and tortoises bathed in precious metal.

These Persian towns are blessed things. One strives through the heat, the glare of the road and the monotony of the hills sparsely clad with grass, rounds a corner, and there is the "strip of herbage strown" and, beyond it, leafy and refreshing, the Persian town. Those who have not known the great heat, the torment of dire thirst, the *fear* of mortal thirst, can never realise the balm and safety of clear water and of green grass.

Thence they pressed on to cosmopolitan Kasvin, at the junction of the roads to the Caspian and to Teheran; its bazars enclosed and arcaded and thick with carpet shops.

The technique of getting a carpet at a reasonable price in those lawless days was to wait till the local merchants had heard of the imminent arrival of a regiment of Persian Cossacks, who would certainly have what they wanted at their own price. Then one went to the bazar and there bargained with the distraught

carpet sellers. As the Cossacks were always several months in arrears over their pay, the prices they paid for their purchases were sacrificial.

The Persians looked on the British as rather soft, for the British paid for what they took and gave what they promised to give. They said openly that the moment the Russians appeared on the south of the Caspian, both British and Indian troops would run like scalded cats.

At Kasvin, our officer first learned of the Red Russian landing the day before at Enzeli on the Caspian; of the evacuation of the town by the British-Indian force, and of its retirement.

The less one thinks of those hours, the better. That evening, with the threat before him of bombardment of an open town full of helpless people, the British Commander had marched out, leaving behind to the invader a good store of warlike material and the rusty ships of Denikin's White Fleet. His men had marched stiffly to their front, conscious of the shame of capitulation, between the ragged ranks of Bolshevik citizen soldiers.

Do statesmen never learn their lessons? Too often they must be told that policy can seldom safely outstep the military means to enforce it.

To the north of Kasvin lay the wild Elburz Mountains confused as a storm-tossed ocean suddenly frozen, black with pines and full of brigands. To the far east stood up the great peak of Demavend, its tip nearly four miles above the sea.

He left his men at Kasvin and made out along the open plain to join the little force on the shores of the Caspian. In a Ford van he passed through villages and vineyards, through vine-arboured Kuhim, towards the deep, sunless gorge of Yous Basi Chai that cleaves the Elburz in two and lets the stream of life flow between the highlands of Persia and the lowlands of Gilan about the Caspian, and across the sea to the Volga and Russia. Places in the deep gloom of fable and legend, wild and strange, to the north: this gorge led him there as the Ginnungagap led to shadowy Niflheim.

As the Ford van sped along the open highlands he saw like a speck before him a donkey and its Persian owner in the middle of the road. Jehu hooted and hooted and went faster and faster. The van approached; the quarry got into a trot, and then into a canter and outdistanced the man of Iran.

Jehu found his brakes at last and applied them, but the car slid into the donkey and stopped dead with brother ass looking up



at the passengers, tail in air, white belly pleated and bulging towards them, neck bent under, head upside down, balanced on his panniers. Jehu got out and pushed him up straight among a cascade of eggshells and a greasy stream of the yellow yolk of eggs.

The car plunged down into the deep gorge and sped through it, on into the giant's cup of Manjil. At Manjil, driver and passengers hopped out before the mud resthouse in a tearing, raging gale with a bright sunny sky—the normal daily and all-day hurricane of Manjil: a veritable curse, wearing to the nerves and searing to the eyes, for it carries clouds of dust and grit. Thick olive trees are all bent eastwards from its incessant labours; great tar barrels are overset and rolled across the flats.

They stood and watched those that fled before the Red Horror. Streams of wagons (*fourgons*), drawn by two or four horses abreast, cluttered up with the *lares et penates* of poor White Russians and other refugees from the Bolshevik terrors, rolled creaking over the long iron bridge that spanned the tawny Safid Rud. Many people with great loads: many women and many children: a motley column of apprehension and despondency. Manjil was soon a seething press of sweating and lamenting creatures who had lost their poor all.

He found the force at Resht, his own battalion beneath shiny waterproof-sheet bivouacs, a war-worn, veteran unit, under the dull, drizzly weather, in a green, open space with the woods to the south of it, paddy fields to the left, lush water-meadows and yellow iris to the right, and, ahead, the town of Resht across a broad, deep-banked, muddy channel.

Resht is now a memory of rich greenery and soft, still drizzle: of deep reedy water-meadows full of tall yellow iris: of dripping woods like our Sussex highwoods and of snakes slithering by scores off the little paddy banks into the shallow pools before his feet.

Soon the force, suddenly quitting Resht by night, was in retreat again on its sad pilgrimage to Manjil. In that first long night-march eye-weariness nearly overcame them. It was the monotony of tramping through those dark, dripping woods, all along a road, with only the occasional dim twinkle of an oil-dip in the *chai* (tea)-shop by the roadside.

Wherever one goes in Persia there is the inevitable, poorly found *chai*-shop where gossips meet, to do as gossips do.

In Imam Zadeh Hachen, in the incessant drizzle, they bivouacked on a green space to the east of the road with the roar of the brown, rain-gorged Safid Rud beside them. South, the white

shrine of Imam Zadeh on a little hill and to the west the woods and rising hills of Gilan.

Bit by bit the force withdrew with a little bickering about Manjil and at the crossing of the Shah Rud at Loshan, into the great sunless gorge of Yous Basi Chai, through into the daylight and up on to the Kasvin plateau, to await its enemy on the open plain. As the troops came into the town the grape harvest was in full swing, and in the huts that did for messes such a pile and spread of grapes that they never saw before or since.

Summer, with its apricots and peaches and its heat and flies, wore slowly on. In early autumn the Persian Cossacks gathered in Kasvin from Teheran and their outlying posts. To the chagrin of the British, this partially-disciplined mob, with its dandies of White Russian officers, marched straight down the road and pushed the Russian rabble back to Resht, a sore blow to our *amour propre*. But before long came news of dissension and indiscipline: boots were worn out and none to replace them, pay was months in arrears; rumours came up that the officers had pouched the men's money. The mob oozed back from Resht.

Our Captain's Gurkha battalion hurried out of Kasvin for Manjil as hard as it could put foot to ground and camped over the Cossack bivouac at Windy Corner, place of all the spare winds of heaven. Colonel Philipoff, asked to come over for a drink that evening, appeared spick and span in his white gloves. The Russian Colonel had his whisky, and the British Colonel had his information as to the early start of the Cossacks for the morrow. The next morning at dawn the Persians moved off. The Gurkhas were ready to follow, except for one subaltern who yet remained in the wind-blown wreck of a tent. The Adjutant sought him and found him breechless, too modest to appear and to march in that condition. Like Ajax, he sat within his tent: but he would not come forth, like Ajax, barelegged. The wind had thieved his breeches in the night and blown them to the Cossacks. He sat, a prisoner to his modesty.

After shadowing the Cossacks to Kasvin the battalion came north again to join the force in touch with the Russians about Manjil. On the oft-trodden old road, British and Indian troops were hastening forward to get to grips with the Russians again: the Chestnut Troop trotted fast down the winding road from Kuhim, through the dark gorge of Yous Basi Chai. For three weeks of constant drizzle the force was in and about Rudbar,

staggering round in gumboots, knee-high in the ordurous mud of a Persian village.

The steep khaki hills rose to the west, bare as the palm of your hand. The village was of single-storied mud huts with *chai*-shops along the road's edge, between the houses and an olive grove that runs down to the brown waters of the broad Safid Rud. The Rudbar stream, normally a bubbling streamlet six inches deep, was now dirty and swift and swollen. Ahead lay the wooded belt of Mazanderan and Gilan, fringing the Caspian.

On a brightish morning of yellow sunlight, with cold white pillars of cloud charging each other below the blue dome of heaven, the battalion waded the Rudbar torrent moving north to its enemy. The stallions in the Persian *fourgons* fought and bit and the wagons stuck axle-deep in muck, to be heaved out by sweating, overladen soldiers.

The rain came driving down: the force bivouacked along the road and in the streaming forests, to the occasional sound of a shot from some patrol "seeing things" among the boles of ghostly trees. Day came. The advance went on: the sun came out: three enemy lay on their backs side by side on the grass by the road, smiling up to heaven, precisely where the leading armoured car had dropped them. There was little fighting: only patrols pressing on and hostile patrols withdrawing along the road and in the woods towards Resht and the Caspian.

A Persian winter came on with all its rigour. The Gurkhas went into outposts for the winter at Rustamabad. Both sides sat tight, the forward posts a mile apart with a glorious playground of wooded hills between them and the great river on the eastern flank. It was not long before the enemy dared not put one foot beyond his outpost line: the playground was ours and only our games were played. In this arena light patrols kept up the fight till April came, when the British hitched their wagons and crossed the Safid Rud at Manjil, for home.

Food was good. The "general" among the men grew sick of caviare in their ration: there was *mast* (whey) to be got from villages: great combs of wild honey came in on donkeys: Persian nougat in lumps the size of a baby, decked meltingly the mess tables. Wild pig were to be got for the shooting, their chops a particular delicacy. "Swallow and Ariel," the firm with a fairy name and the best of jams, came to be blessed by everyone.

Refugees still came in, in spite of snow five or six feet deep. One night the Adjutant sat in his hut writing by a hurricane

lamp, snow softly falling outside, when a sentry appeared before him. He looked up at the word "Memsahib," and there was a Russian girl, tow-haired and rather pale, with a small Russian boy. Her tale was one of wandering for days in the snow in the hills trying to avoid the Bolshevik posts and finally dropping down into Rustamabad, the boy nearly exhausted. The Adjutant handed over his one and only spare vest, ordnance pattern, of the same texture as the shirt of Nessus. Whoever wore it either did not feel it or disguised his or her feelings. Other officers did likewise and threw in a pair or two of what the Army call "bull-wool" socks, also of ordnance pattern.

Winter turned to early spring in the Kizil Uzun valley. Of all the beautiful sights this valley and its hills on a sunny day, with their snowy mountains, are the loveliest. Across the river that laced its tenuous way through the frosty sand-banks, stood up the white cone of the Dalfak Dag, pine-capped, pine-girt. Among the lower, leafless woods all about, the hills showed pure white, delicately tinted with blue. Nearer by, the trees bore their burden of snow, the grass showed green, the trees budded and the primroses and violets came to bloom, a playground for the brindled pheasants that roamed these hills.

In early April there was heavy rain and the snows melted above our valley: Kizil Uzun and Shah Rud came down in spate. Manjil bridge, which both sides had often partially blown, was in a death struggle with the raging torrent. There was haste to get the column and its miles of heavy wagons away and across the Safid Rud before the stout bridge gave up the fight. The Rudbar streamlet had become a menacing flood, waistdeep everywhere, in places head-high.

The Gurkhas laboured, soaked to the skin, in and about the Rudbar stream, and cleared the transport. One of them was washed down the flood and nearly into the Safid Rud, losing his rifle, and was for no reason ashamed of himself at the loss. There are Marys and there are Marthas in this world; the Marys may possibly be of some use to creation in general, to the Army they are a curse and should go unrewarded.

A last memory of Rustamabad comes back just as the battalion left it and the rearguard commander turned to look north towards Siah Rud, to see if the enemy was on the move and to hit him one last blow. Under the dull grey, windblown sky, he saw on the stony flats above the noisy Safid Rud a small, wooden cross where one of his men so quietly slept.



Striving onward, lifting wagons out of the deep mud, unhitching horses and manhandling loads, the battalion worked its way slowly towards Manjil. A staff officer rode back to say that the bridge was going: the last wagon, overtaken by the Safid Rud, washed fast into the slit, was abandoned, its driver leading his exhausted horses towards the bridge.

The men chased their transport to the bridge and started to cross. The rear guard commander arrived and stood on the north bank watching. There was still half the battalion to come. The transport was crossing. The river was licking at the roadway of the bridge and swirling widely round the tops of the piers. He wondered if he'd have to stay on the Russian side, swim the animals over and fight it out.

The bridge sagged again and up came the rest of the battalion. They skidded and slithered across the dangerously inclined roadway while the onlookers stood with their hearts in their mouths. At last the Infantry Captain and the Sapper ran for it, feeling like Horatius cursing at the too zealous and, surely, block-headed fathers when he knew he'd have to swim.

Soon afterward, the sorely-tried bridge, writhing in the agony of death, with one thunderous shout, gave up the ghost and plunged into the torrent.

\* \* \* \*

The railwaymen had left with nothing achieved.

For us this was the twilight after sunset: for Persia the twilight before dawn. It was we who purposely made modern Iran possible, no whit less than we made modern Iraq: behind the British shield Iran was born. She has forgotten this as Italy has forgotten our aid to Garibaldi.

You must know that the soldier is an idealist and builds his hopes too high, hitches his limbers to the stars and falls mightily if fall he must. In Persia for three full years he strove and endured, believing that he built for eternity and that the end must be that at least Persia must honour his race. Utterly and hopelessly he failed, his travail bore no fruit that was not rotted by fantastic policies.

Whatever else may contribute to prestige, it is certain that nothing helps more surely than the honour paid to our unconquered armies.

The heavy tramp of the retreating force along the squat white road beat out the last spark of British prestige and left behind a Persia grinning and mocking at our disappointments, hostile and contemptuous.



## "THOSE ILL-STARRED HORNS"

By R. G.

In the last issue of this Journal, the author of "Duffer in Assam" roundly condemned the employment of flankers in jungle warfare, and summed up their imperfections in the trenchant phrase "those ill-starred horns." There are, however, two sides to most stories. Consider, for example, the trespasser sprinting for the nearest hedge who, if capable of coherent thought, probably thinks that bulls would be much better animals without their horns—but, would any bull be likely to agree with him?

"Duffer in Assam" is presumably based upon personal experience in the field, and the writer's conclusions therefore merit due consideration. On the other hand, he is surely unwise to base a general tactical conclusion upon the outcome of a single skirmish. As a case in point, some may recall, for it was headline news at the time, how a column was badly ambushed some dozen years ago, in Northern Burma. The column commander, anxious to press on, and assured by "friendly" guides that there were no enemy in his vicinity, called in his flankers. Shortly afterwards the column checked, and the commander went forward to ascertain the reason. He found a tree across the path; at that moment volleys were poured into the halted advanced guard by enemy who, though invisible, were only a few yards off the path. The column commander, if he had lived, might well have sworn, in direct contradiction to the Duffer, to "see himself in blazes" before he ever again moved through jungle *without* flankers.

Jungle warfare, as British forces have often discovered somewhat late, is a highly specialized form of fighting; yet its minor tactics are largely a matter of commonsense. Flankers are simply flankguards which, in order to perform their normal protective functions, have to move very close to their parent bodies in country in which visibility is limited to yards, or even feet. Security must always be paid for, and though there are shifts and expedients for minimising the delay, flankers cutting or threading their way through jungle must always hamper mobility. A commander may, therefore, decide to dispense with flankers but, like his opposite number who, in mountain warfare, chooses to operate without route picquets, should have special reasons for doing so.

The Duffer's own reasons for operating without flankers were, we suggest, an example of these special circumstances. At the time, he was withdrawing over previously reconnoitred ground,

in face of an enemy whose characteristics, and particularly limitations, were known to him. Moreover his opposition, we are told, had got away with it time and again, and it was most desirable that they should be taught a sharp lesson. In other words, the Duffer took a carefully calculated risk in order to attain an important object, and deservedly reaped the reward.

If the Duffer had pointed this moral from his experiences we should have cordially agreed with him. We quarrel only, but most emphatically, with the conclusion he *did* arrive at—namely that flankers are useless in all circumstances.

It is not our present purpose to discuss details of jungle tactics, but it is worth remarking that a small column, such as the Duffer commanded, would seldom employ 60 flankers working, apparently, in conjunction with the advanced guard. The usual principles are to use as few men as possible on this exhausting duty, to quicken movement by changing them fairly frequently, and to throw out small flanking groups at intervals along the column, rather than trust to a few large parties, between which an enemy may more easily penetrate. Incidentally, there are several simple formations in which flankers may move besides the V-shaped horns mentioned by the Duffer. The horns may, for example, be reversed, or straightened out to move parallel with the axis of advance. The respective utility of these formations naturally depends upon such factors as the type of jungle, the habits of the enemy, and how much the route twists and turns.

A point of more general interest is the repeated suggestion in "Duffer in Assam" that night operations might have dealt effectively with the local tribes, if only the Assam Rifles of that day had not preserved "a wisdom which was untinged with imagination." That is as may be, but we suggest that the red-necked Captain who held that night work was d—d dangerous in the jungle had some justification for his views. The Duffer's contention that "Grant moved by night from Tammu to Thobal" and subsequently won a V.C., is hardly conclusive proof to the contrary.

The normal difficulties of military movements by night are well known, but in open country a commander may set against them the advantages of concealment from view and strike a favourable balance, especially when he wishes to attain surprise or save avoidable casualties. In the jungle, the potential margin of advantage which darkness may confer is whittled away by the conditions. On the one hand trees and dense undergrowth make

the maintenance of direction and preservation of silence exceptionally difficult; on the other, thick vegetation can provide almost as much concealment to troops by day as by night. Moreover, while unforeseen incidents, calculated to throw a carefully planned night operation out of gear may happen anywhere, they seem to happen oftenest in the jungle. This, at least, has been the experience of the present writer.

To give a few examples, a column under his command was charged while approaching a village in pitch darkness by a herd of semi-wild buffaloes. The tactical mules, somewhat naturally, panicked and it took till nightfall the next day to retrieve all their scattered loads. A few of the mules unfortunately met, and stayed with, tigers. On another occasion the column doctor, who was quite irreplaceable, met a tiger in the moonlight, and though he easily beat it to the nearest tree, the encounter was the final straw which finished him. Next morning he headed his own sick report, marked for "Evacuation to the Base." Another unusual incident occurred when the guides for a night advance, though secured against all ordinary eventualities, were collectively attacked and bitten by forest demons. As one consequence dawn showed that the column had surrounded the wrong village.

Such incidents may be amusing in retrospect; they are not so at the time, and are only the highlights of the series of lesser and more prosaic irritations and delays which, we believe, are a normal accompaniment to such ventures. We do not for a moment suggest that night operations in the jungle should be ruled out; we do urge that no commander should undertake them without considerable previous *personal* experience of the conditions to which he may commit his men. Even a well trained shrubbery, let alone the undisciplined jungle, is very different after dark. Like dispensing with flankers, it is all a question of *knowing* when accepted principles may be judiciously set aside.

A year or so ago most readers would have regarded "Duffer in Assam" as a readable yarn (which it is) about a type of fighting they were never likely to experience. To-day the situation has altered, and some who lack personal experience of jungle warfare may have given serious consideration to the Duffer's theories.

These words of warning regarding their whole-hearted acceptance may therefore serve a useful purpose. If they provoke further, and wider, discussion on the art of fighting in forests so much, we believe, the better.

## FINANCIAL RAMBLINGS IN RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

BY RS., AS., PS., IN ENGLAND

Our individual financial future prospect cannot be described as a thing of joy to behold; in fact it is all so vague that it is hard to see at all, and so there is all the more reason why we should face it and at least have some plan. I shall make no attempt to view this from a national aspect but rather from the point of view of each officer's personal plan to make life financially bearable for himself and his family in the years of peace to come.

One thing is certain in this uncertain world: when we have defeated our enemies, the war will have to be paid for. You may say "But that's the job of the Chancellor of the Exchequer." To which I reply "Pardon me, it will have to be paid for by me the writer, and you the reader." Visions, therefore, of a jolly leave to come with a little car, a little flutter in town and carefully selected schools for the children need to be tempered by the cold blast of post-war finance. Our families will need new clothes and we will want mufti to replace the uniform in which we now live all day, every day and (in raids) all night. If we just dream along with a pre-war financial outlook, we shall have a rude awakening.

The writer, regretfully, can provide no positive solution, but he is one of those funny people who have, for years, including the present war-time year in England, kept an exact record of all expenditure, apportioning each item to its appropriate head. Let us therefore turn the pages of this record and ponder on the actual pre-war costs of items, such as leave, clothes on leave, education, and the war-time present cost of living in England; then let us try to visualize the problem which will face us when peace comes.

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

The case taken throughout is that of an Indian Army Officer and his wife with two children, boy and girl, from prep. school to public school, with no home in England, thus involving the family in "holiday home" expenses except when the parents were on leave; in the last war-time year the boy becomes a medical student.

## THE SCHOOLS

The first carefully recorded pages over nine years include all prep. and public school fees and house bills, examination fees, a good deal of clothes (but not all) and the cost of holiday homes for about half of the nine years as the mother was home for approximately 50 per cent. of the holidays. The schools were public schools of repute but in both cases reduced fees for army officers' children were admissible.

The first entry (1930): "Children's initial school outfits and trunks, £72;" is worth noting. The prep. schools started in the first year in the region of £125 each per annum (no holiday home costs), but in the second year rose to £162. There was at this time a very cheap holiday home arrangement as the usual minimum is three guineas each per week; as there are 17 weeks holidays a year, this amounts to £53-10-0 each per year. In later years it rose to £190 each per year, the grand total for the nine years for the two children amounting to £2,712, a remarkably low figure due largely to considerate treatment on the part of the schools. This is a useful figure for parents with infants now in India to bear in mind as it is hardly likely to cost so little in the years to come. An interesting point is that though the girl's fees were less than the boy's, the total cost of her nine years was a fraction more than the boy's; this is because a boy's hair, for example, costs 6d. to hack while your girl's school has a glamorous young woman up to the school from the local beauty parlour to shampoo and cut the hair at a very different cost. Girls too, won't be satisfied with a pair of grey flannel prep. school shorts and stockings falling (invariably) half-way down their legs in wrinkles like their brothers. Even the youngest of girls are, like their mothers, slaves to Fashion with attendant reflex on school bills!

Before leaving the cost of schools, a few facts culled from brief experience of medical students' costs are illuminating. Oxford costs, they say, a minimum of £260 a year, an apparently preposterous sum. The fees for London University students were shown at £50 a year and so this course was chosen. The addition at the end of the first year, however, of fees, instruments, examination fees and coaching, amounted to £93. Rail fares cost £22, bus fares in London 4d. return daily (work it out, it's quite a lot), and even there the expense did not end for there were daily lunches and teas, pocket money and games expenses and, on top of all this, of course, the run of the boy's teeth at



home—a minimum of 15/- a week or say £40 a year. Taken all in all it does not appear that the Oxford figure of £260 is very high after all and naturally life at Oxford, with its organized activities, is infinitely preferable to life in London for a boy—sorry, very young man!

#### LEAVE, HOME AND CLOTHES

However, we won't spend our all on education, so let us lick the thumb and flick over the pages to the much more interesting "record of expenses on leave." Take, for example, 1927, spent in cheap hotels with two very young children; nice clothes, dances, games and flutters in town, "very tasty, very sweet" as the modern radio has it.

Well, here are the costs:

April £75, May £55, June £107 (partly in town), July £76, August £90, September £130. Wife's and own clothes £190. Ah! those were the days—but I see a footnote which reads "spent on leave above my pay £310"! Average spent £90 per month *plus* £190 on clothes and no education costs in those young days.

Let's see if we had more wisdom in 1931; well, yes, a little; the average monthly expenditure had dropped to £77 a month and clothes to £158. Still, on the other hand, school fees had begun. The reason for the drop in the cost of living is clearly seen from the records for the months spent in a furnished house which were markedly less than the months spent in even a cheap hotel.

Now comes the period of short visits to the children in England; "2 months leave ex-India." Take 1934 for example when the passages were paid from the Lee Commission Account.

Well,—

	£
Rail fares in India and France cost ...	30
Cash on the boat took ...	10
Living expenses and the children's clothes for 5 weeks in England amounted to ...	120
While clothes for the parents cost ...	45
Making a total for the two months of ...	<u>205</u>

Not so bad as it roughly equalled my pay, but of course I had not to pay cash for the passages.

Details of later years would only be wearisome, but they increased as the children grew older as one finds that they are treated by hoteliers as adults and so one is driven (fortunately)

to the infinitely preferable and cheaper furnished house. The costs of these on leave in pre-war years when great attempts at economy were not allowed to override the joys of a happy leave home, were:

	£	s.	d.	
Seaside house: average: Rent	...	3	3	0 a week.
Two Maids (sybarite!)	...	2	0	0
Food, light, etc.	...	6	11	0
		11	14	0 a week.
Country house: average: Rent	...	3	3	0
Maid	...	1	5	0
Food, light, etc.	...	5	0	0
		9	8	0 a week.

Heigh ho! Pleasant years; may the future Indian Army officer have as good in the peace to come!

By the way, remember that Lee Commission passages are not endless; there comes a time when passages will have to be paid from one's pay.

#### THE POST-WAR HOME

Before the writer gives details of the current actual war-time cost of living in England he will be so bold as to give his personal views on the type of home life the majority of us will be forced by circumstances to adopt when the war is over.

I had always hoped that the days of retirement would find me in a small house, not new, matured and purchased by cash payment. From this home I looked forward to going daily to the work which there was, in pre-war days, so good a prospect of obtaining.

Well, coming home in war-time, I found it impossible to "settle" and my guess is that in the post-war years it will be still more difficult till things stabilize somewhat. We will have "to look round a bit"—perhaps even consider going to a colony abroad. To this will be added the difficulty, even if one can settle, of finding a house; there is bound to be a shortage as so many of the nicely-matured houses will be demolished or burnt out—so many only fit for demolition. There will be a shortage, too, of building materials and wood and slate and even if we can get these, it is doubtful if we will have saved in war-time the money to build.

Excepting, of course, those fortunate enough to have read my article\* in the June issue of the *U. S. I. (I.) Journal*. I admit that there is the Building-Society-Hire-Purchase solution, a great boon in many ways but which has, I contend, two great disadvantages. Admittedly one is saving all the time one is paying, but the fact remains that one is paying out in hard cash each year an instalment which (including interest and "Property Tax") amounts to a good deal more than the actual cash which would be required to be paid out as rent of the house if rented. Secondly, the moment one starts hire purchase one acquires a number of sticks and stones which tend to anchor one and prevent a move one might otherwise make to better conditions.

Another factor which will make for the fleeting nature of our life in post-war years will be the difficulty of finding a job. Before the war, the army officer could find useful work comparatively easily as, say, an Area A. R. P. Organizer or Ground Officer in the R.A.F., and to-day these and manifold army and semi-army posts are available—one does not even have to seek them. But these, I fear (or perhaps I should say, pray), will cease and so we will have to move about a good deal to find work or to keep it.

The result, therefore, of these ponderings is that I feel, in the first post-war years, we will be forced, for a time, as I have been forced in war-time, to adopt a life in furnished houses while carefully keeping every blanket, knife, etc., which may be needed; property of any kind should, I feel, be husbanded. This prospect of living in furnished houses appalled me financially but, strangely enough, I find from actual figures it is not so uneconomical as one might expect. One may say, too, "I hate living in other people's houses; I like my own." I daresay, but there are many things in Europe just now and for a few years to come which are not of our choosing.

One small point which of course is only applicable in war-time is that in the furnished house we are saved from purchasing and sewing black-out curtains for every window in the house—a big expense—and get a fine air-raid shelter (in which we have already spent many hours by night during raids), which otherwise I could not have afforded to build.

Well, now for the cost: the house consists of four bedrooms, three sitting rooms beautifully furnished, and a garage. The rent is £3-13-6 a week, that is to say £180 a year. This may sound heavy, but when one considers that the house probably

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\* "How to Live in India on Your Pay," by Rs., As., Ps.

cost £2,500 and the furniture and fittings another £1,000, it does not compare unfavourably with either buying or renting a house. Remember, too, that there are no rates and taxes to pay and one not only avoids buying furniture but such innumerable household fittings as electric fires and lamps, gas fires and cookers, Frigidaire, Hoover, endless cleaning appliances, crockery and a vast variety of cooking requirements, lawn mower and a lot of garden tools while the cost of depreciation is not borne by me. So, taken all round, it does not appear uneconomical and has the great merit of giving greater freedom to move. Not to be the owner of a house and furniture in these days of bombs has decided advantages too.

Reverting once more to detailed costs, I do not find the cost of living very much increased yet (but the purchase tax will soon be operative). I got a very fine 16-h.p. Wolseley for £25 and petrol costs 2/- a gallon; a low-h.p. car would naturally have cost more owing to petrol restrictions. Cigarettes have gone up 50 per cent., the standard cigarette costing the equivalent of Rs. 2-8-0 for a tin of 50, while the cost of whisky makes me feel so bad that only a strong peg pulls me together. Still, in general, the cost of living is not impossibly high as will be seen from the following very exact figures for June during which every penny of housekeeping money was accounted for separately. The costs are for four adults and a daily maid:

TABLE I

		<i>1st week</i>	<i>2nd week</i>	<i>3rd week</i>	<i>4th week</i>	TOTAL
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	..
Rent	..	3-15-0	3-15-0	3-15-0	3-15 0	..
Maid	..	0-15-0	0-15 0	0-15 0	0-15-0	..
House keeping (see App. "A" at end) ..		3-4-8	3 16 8	3-14-2	3-7-6	..
<i>Total Cost of living</i> (i.e., what a hotel would give. ..		7-14-8	8-6-8	8-4-2	7-17-6	32-3-0

Had we lived in a hotel at three guineas a week it would have cost a minimum of £50-8-0 for poor food, no sitting room, no garage and perhaps no garden. Should housewives be interested, fuller details are given in Appendix "A."

The above, of course, deals with household expenses and readers may be interested to know the total cost of living for all heads; these are given in Table II below.

TABLE II

	1st week	2nd week	3rd week	4th week	Total.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Household vide Table I ..	7 14 8	8 6 8	8 4 2	7 17 6	32 3 0
Cigarettes for two adults average ..	0 16 8	0 16 8	0 16 8	0 16 8	3 6 6
Wireless ..	0 5 2	..	..	1 12 6	2 7 8
Travelling ..	1 8 0	..	2 10 0	..	3 18 0
Cash (see Appendix "B") ..	3 8 3	2 0 1	4 18 9	2 11 9	12 18 10
Totals ..	14 2 9	11 3 5	16 9 7	12 18 5	54 14 0

As the sum spent on "cash" was a large sum, £12-18-10, I give details in Appendix "B."

This month or rather four weeks of June have been selected as it so happens that in this month accounts were particularly accurately kept but it must be admitted that the figure of £54-14-0 is the lowest for some months. Moreover, this was our first month of raids, day and night, and so the sum spent on amusements was negligible. The following also were not included: education, insurance, car tax and car insurance or clothes.

At the Staff College once, a student, famous for straying from the point, after addressing us all for 20 minutes, was asked by the Director "And to what conclusion, X, does that lead you?" Captain X looked blank and was silent! Well I too am very nearly as badly stumped after rambling through the pages of my little book; still, it *does* give some ideas.

First, we must budget now during war-time to meet all the expenses I have shown.

Secondly, once we try to "settle" even in a furnished house on retirement, we'll be able to live on much less than when on leave, largely because so much less is spent on clothes and moving about.

Thirdly, when next the time comes round for leave we must go straight to one place, e.g., a furnished house, and "stay put" till the day we sail.



## APPENDIX "A"

		1st week	2nd week	3rd week	4th week	
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Butcher	..	0 10 1	0 9 5	0 13 3	0 10 4	
Grocer ..	..	1 7 10	1 12 5	1 0 1	0 17 6	
Vegetables	..	0 13 0	1 1 10	0 13 3	0 18 2	
Dairy ..	..	0 7 4	0 7 0	0 6 6	0 6 2	
Laundry	..	0 4 3	0 3 2	0 4 2	..	
Baker ..	..	..	..	0 12 3	0 3 2	For three weeks.
Petty ..	..	0 2 2	0 2 10	0 8 0	0 10 4	
		3 4 8	3 16 8	3 7 6	3 14 2	

NOTE.—The standard of food was very high, each item being of the most expensive quality.

## APPENDIX "B"

*Detail of Cash spent in June*

	£	s.	d.
Postage	...	...	0 16 9
Hairdresser (for three)	...	...	0 7 6
Car, petrol and repairs	...	...	3 7 0
Golf, green fees and teas	...	...	0 16 6
Bus fares and meals out	...	...	0 19 1
Petty Clothes	...	...	1 7 6
Chemist	...	...	0 19 0
Knitting wool	...	...	0 13 10
Books and papers	...	...	0 7 6
Drink	...	...	0 5 9 !
Stationery	...	...	0 8 7
Unaccounted for	...	...	2 9 10
			<u>12 18 10</u>

## COMMISSIONED FROM THE RANKS

### A CONTRAST

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL C. C. R. MURPHY

In the days when purchase was the recognized method of military advancement, the difficulties of obtaining a commission from the ranks were of an entirely different nature from those which confront the young soldier at the present time. The way in which it was done during the Napoleonic wars, when there was some resentment against the principle of granting commissions to men "who had not put their hands in their pockets to pay for them honourably," can best be shown by examples. The two here chosen will enable the reader to compare the old system with the new, and at the same time to draw his own conclusions.

The first is that of an infantryman.

It is the story of a pauper boy, who enlisted at the age of 13 and became an officer. Though he never rose above the rank of lieutenant, his military career was one of the most remarkable on record. No army has ever produced a better soldier.

The hero of these adventures was a certain John Shipp, born in Saxmundham in the year 1784. His father was a soldier; but his mother died when he was very young, leaving him and his elder brother in utter destitution in consequence of which they became inmates of the parish poorhouse. He was then apprenticed by the overseers to a farmer, a cruel taskmaster who beat him unmercifully.

Early in 1797, Shipp enlisted in the 22nd Foot. After serving in the Channel Islands and at the Cape, he found himself, in the year 1804, a young sergeant in the Grenadier Company and attached to Lord Lake's army which was fighting the Marathas.

Here was his chance, and he made the fullest use of it. He was one of the stormers at the capture of Deig at the end of 1804, and he led the forlorn hope of the storming column in three out of the four desperate but fruitless assaults on Bhurtpore in the early part of the following year, receiving severe wounds upon each occasion. He was now a marked man. His leadership and daring were the admiration of the army, and he was promptly rewarded with an ensigncy in the 65th Foot. A few weeks later, he was promoted lieutenant in the 76th Foot.

With this regiment Shipp returned home in 1807; but he soon got into debt and had to sell out. Being a man of honour, however, he paid his debts with the money he had received, and then found himself in London without a shilling.

Determined not to remain idle, he now enlisted in the 24th Light Dragoons and returned to India; and so outstanding were his qualities as a soldier that before the end of 1812 he was promoted regimental sergeant-major. In May, 1815, he was gazetted to an ensigncy in the 87th Regt. He had thus performed the unique feat of *twice winning a commission from the ranks*, and all before he was thirty-two years of age.

During the Gurkha war, Shipp again distinguished himself, notably in single combat at Makwanpore. He was on the staff of the army under the Marquess Hastings in the Pindari and Maratha wars of 1817-18, and showed high skill and courage at the capture of Hathras, where he was the first man to enter the fort. In 1821, he was promoted lieutenant for the second time.

Shortly afterwards, while stationed in Calcutta, he took up racing and this led to his downfall. Quarrels arose, in the course of which he impugned the character of his superior officer, who was also his racing partner; and in 1823 he was discharged from the army by sentence of court-martial.

Having laid down the sword, he now took up the pen and set about compiling his memoirs, which first appeared in 1829. This interesting book, written with great modesty, and in a quaint and attractive style, was so well received that it ran into several editions. For a man who, when he enlisted, was unable to sign the pay-sheet, this was remarkable achievement, and secured for him a place amongst English authors.

Two years later, he wrote a treatise on flogging in the Army. This was a powerful indictment against the use of the "cat," and a Member of Parliament thought so highly of it that he sent the author a present of £50. It was not long before the principles which Shipp had advocated were in the main adopted by the military authorities.

By this time, Shipp had caught the eye of the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Sir Charles Rowan, who had been wounded at Waterloo while serving with the 52nd Foot. Shipp's first appointment was that of Inspector, but he was soon made a Superintendent. As a police officer he was a great success and liked by everyone. In 1834, when in comparatively easy circumstances and after a life of adventure, he died in his bed, leaving

behind him a widow, some children and many friends to mourn his loss.

The next example of promotion from the ranks, which the reader is asked to consider, is that of the cavalryman, John Elley; it affords a striking contrast to the one first given.

It is not certain where or when he first saw the light of day, but he is said to have been born in London, where his father owned a prosperous eating-house. The regimental records show that Elley, who, unlike John Shipp, had received a good education, enlisted in the Oxford Blues—now the Royal Horse Guards—near the end of 1789; and that seven months later he purchased a troop quartermastership in the regiment, such warrant rank being then procurable in this way.

In 1794, he went to Flanders with four troops of the Blues, who had been ordered there to join the army of the brave old Duke of York; and he is said to have particularly distinguished himself in the cavalry action at Le Cateau in the same year.

Very soon afterwards, he was appointed acting adjutant of the detachment, having in the meantime purchased a cornetcy in the same regiment.

Returning to England in the following year, he continued to purchase his promotion step by step; and, in the spring of 1806, became a lieutenant-colonel in the regiment he had joined as a trooper less than 17 years before! His rise, especially in such a regiment as the Blues, had been rapid indeed; but if the money for all this promotion had come from a prosperous eating-house, we may be sure that it benefited not only John Elley, but the Army at large.

In 1808, as A.A.G. of cavalry, he went to the Peninsula where he remained for six years and saw much fighting. For his services in that campaign he was created a K.C.B.

When Napoleon escaped from Elba and the allied armies were assembling in Belgium, Elley was appointed to the staff of the Duke of Wellington as adjutant-general of cavalry. At Waterloo, where he was again wounded, he served with great distinction, and laid low more than one cuirassier with his own sabre in single combat. On the eve of Quatre Bras, he was one of the guests at the famous Waterloo Ball.

In 1835 he was returned to Parliament as member for Windsor, and two years later was promoted lieutenant-general. At the beginning of 1839, he died, unmarried, at his seat in Wiltshire and was buried in the Chapel Royal at Windsor.

Other days, other ways.

## LEARNING HINDUSTANI

BY "KARSHISH"

It will be best to admit at once that Urdu and not Hindustani is the name officially recognised by the Board of Examiners. This is curious for the language most spoken in Government Services, and more particularly the Army, cannot by any stretch of imagination, be called Urdu. It would be far less incorrect to call it Hindi, though the use of such a word would obviously be unsatisfactory.

What is the difference between Urdu and Hindi? It is widely believed that Urdu is the language spoken by Muslims and Hindi that spoken by Hindus. This is entirely wrong for while it may be true that Hindi is only spoken by Hindus, some of the purest Urdu in Northern India is also spoken by Hindus. A better definition is that Urdu and Hindi are two versions of Sanraseni Prakrit. The basic grammars of both are the same, but while Urdu has enriched and still enriches its vocabulary from Arabic and Persian, Hindi has borrowed and continues to borrow extensively from Sanscrit.

The term Hindustani is unsatisfactory in that it implies the language of all Hindustan and this it most certainly is not. But it does usefully describe the *lingua franca* of Northern India which is spoken by Muslims and Hindus alike, and of which the vocabulary is determined by usage rather than by systematic borrowing from Arabic and Persian on the one hand or from Sanscrit on the other.

I am bound to admit that I have used the word Hindustani partly because, although I propose to write of both Urdu and Hindi (their literatures are, of course, strikingly different), I thought "Learning Urdu and Hindi" would be an awkward title and likely to be even more repugnant to my few forthright and soldierly readers than the present one.

The whole question of what should be the name of Northern India's *lingua franca* and in what character it should be written has become the object of considerable controversy in which communal feeling takes a regrettably important part. Precisely the same spoken language is often referred to by Muslims as Urdu and by Hindus as Hindi. There is, therefore, a great deal to be said for the somewhat loose expression "Hindustani" which, if it



does nothing else, does serve to emphasise the nationalist rather than the communal aspect.

This is not going to be a learned article and any scholar who tries to read it will probably be overtaken with something akin to nausea. Though I claim to be something of a polyglot I am no philologist. As in my other articles, I shall avoid learned disquisition and shall only try to draw oblique attention to the lighter side of learning Hindustani.

My grandfather spent forty years in India without learning to speak any Indian language, though he is said to have discovered a complicated Hindi expression for a corkscrew, an instrument which he sometimes used. My father told me this just before I went out to India for the first time, and to the awful revelation he added the information that he himself had endeavoured to learn "the language" but that being in the British service he had not made much progress. He advised me to make a point of learning it properly and accordingly I bought "Forbes' Hindustani Manual" and studied it on the journey out.

I extracted a good deal of information from Forbes who, however, introduces some expressions of somewhat doubtful utility such as "Pull the trigger strong with the middle finger." Like many other old language books Forbes' Manual and his Grammar display a thoroughness and scientific comprehension which is largely absent from more modern productions. It was my first essay at language study and I found it quite absorbing. It was somewhat disturbing, therefore, to realise that the men of the Gurkha Regiment, to which I was posted, scarcely spoke Hindustani at all and that in spite of all orders to the contrary, they considered it a point of honour to speak nothing but their own language.\* I soon realised, however, that Gurkhali sounded much more romantic than Hindustani and determined that as soon as I had passed the obligatory colloquial examination, I would give up Hindustani altogether.

As things turned out, my first association with India and Hindustani was to be of very short duration. After three years of active service in France, the easy, humdrum life of an Indian cantonment was sheer delight not unconnected with a welcome improvement in food and other creature comforts. Three months after the Armistice, however, I suddenly realised that I was extremely bored with life in a depot and jumped at the chance of joining one of the active battalions of my regiment at that time

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\*I understand that this state of affairs exists no longer.

serving in the Caucasus. Little did I foresee that I was fated never to join that battalion. After a remarkable journey from India involving no less than six ships, I arrived at the Indian Base Depot, then located at Chanakkalé on the Dardanelles, and learnt with disgust that I was to remain there as adjutant. This, I was told, was due to the fact that I seemed to know a little more Hindustani than the other officers who were also going to join the Army of the Black Sea, and I there and then decided to abandon my studies and take up Turkish and Greek. I did not open a book on Hindustani for another six years.

The work at the Depot was not uninteresting and, by bringing me into touch with almost every class of man enlisted in the Indian Army, gave me experience which I have since found extremely valuable. Our administrative problems in the Depot were often acute. In those days we paid far too much attention to so-called caste prejudice and I remember that on one occasion we had no less than twenty-nine different cook-houses for some two thousand men.

There were no Indian Army officers on the Brigade Staff or at General Headquarters, and we were constantly in trouble for failing to provide Mohammedan sweepers, refusing to send Gurkhas and Jhats on pilgrimage to Mecca and other similar misdemeanours. We were not troubled with the demobilization problem which was causing grave difficulties in British units, and I was full of admiration for the calm philosophy with which Indian ranks took the interminable waits in the depot to which they were subjected. The General Base Depot for British ranks was less patient, and one night some of the wilder and younger officers went so far as to burn down their mess tent. The first that we heard of this incident was the arrival by destroyer of a highly placed and very cross General. Misled by his staff he went by mistake to the Indian Base Depot and having summoned all the officers proceeded to deliver a tonic oration on discipline, playing the game, patience and other splendid subjects. It was some moments before the mistake was discovered, and after a handsome apology, the General departed on the track of the real delinquents.

After a few months with the Depot my Turkish studies were eventually rewarded, and I spent the next five years in various intelligence appointments in Istanbul, Smyrna, Malta and Palestine. While in London, before going to Malta, I was assailed with qualms about my future and asked to go back to my regiment. I

was persuaded to stay on with the War Office for another year, and though this did me much harm in the eyes of the Indian Army authorities, I had an amusing and instructive time and learnt a great deal of Italian in Malta.

In 1925, after four months bogus "language leave" in Italy, Yugo-Slavia and Greece, I returned to Palestine and found that I was at last to rejoin my unit which was now no longer a Gurkha battalion. I immediately wrote a manly but deferential letter to the adjutant explaining how out of touch I was with regimental work, and saying that I expected them to look on me with a very jaundiced eye. Actually the situation was reversed, for immediately afterwards I got jaundice extremely badly and still had a very jaundiced eye when I eventually joined my battalion in the Punjab.

I shall always look back upon the four months that followed as one of the most remarkable and instructive periods of my whole service. I had completed ten years service, three of which had been in France with a British line battalion and seven nominally in the Indian Army but in reality mostly spent in various Intelligence appointments. I had never been to the R.M.C., knew nothing of post-war training and methods and had entirely forgotten the little I had once known of Hindustani. My battalion, which was going through one of those periods of horrified stock-taking familiar to all units, naturally looked at me askance and did their best to get rid of me. The first move was swift. The day after my arrival I was told to go and see the Brigadier in his bungalow. I had known him slightly in Turkey and, in my innocence, expected the cordial handshake and the jocular reminiscence. I found instead a formidable Star Chamber consisting of the Brigadier, the Brigade Major and my C.O. In short, sharp, telling periods the Brigadier pronounced sentence: I knew nothing and was no use to the battalion. This was what he had decided: I was to be considered as a young officer joining from the R.M.C. and was to go for a year to a British battalion. Was this clear?

It was clear enough, but surprising and annoying. After a false start or two, I said that I realised what this meant. I was not in fact a young officer just joining, but had ten years service. If the Brigadier put his threat into operation, I had only one course open to me—to resign my commission. "Very foolish" was how this decision was described by the Brigadier, but the conversation seemed to take a turn for the better. Before I left I said

I thought I would write to Simla reporting what I had been told, and asking whether there were any more Intelligence appointments for me. I was strongly advised not to do this but I did it and learnt eventually that in a year's time I was to go to Iran. Meanwhile I was to stay with my regiment.

When I reviewed the position, I saw that life in an infantry battalion was not going to be easy. The Brigadier had spoken the truth when he said that I knew nothing. My military experience had been confined to active service conditions and was of no use in peace-time; I had never done any courses; I had never passed the Retention Examination. Almost worst of all was the revelation that I, an infantry officer, actually preferred walking to riding. The only ray of hope lay in the facility which I had in learning languages, for I saw that if I could acquire a good knowledge of Hindustani, the greater part of my work could be done by Indian officers who knew more about tactics, training and administration than I could hope to acquire at this late stage. Accordingly, I took a *munshi* and, reading rapidly through the "Khwab-o-Khayal," passed the Higher Standard in two months. My duties of Quartermaster, Transport Officer and Mess Secretary gave me greater practice in speaking Hindustani, but far less in peace-time tactics. Nevertheless, I managed to pass my Retention Examination. (I had already been "retained" for ten years under a misapprehension), and on the whole I was not unhappy, for after their first black looks my brother officers treated me with great indulgence and friendliness.

Looking back on my first serious Hindustani studies, I realise the grave deficiencies of the established method of teaching this language. I cannot speak with precision on the subject, but it seems to me that until quite recently, remarkably little progress has been made in this direction. Had it not been for the outbreak of the present war, sounder methods would most probably have been introduced, but it is astonishing that in the long lifetime of the Board of Examiners no regimented method of acquiring the requisite knowledge of Hindustani should have been evolved. The root of the trouble lies in the failure correctly to assess the extent of the knowledge of Hindustani which British officers should have, and then to provide standard works to enable him to acquire that knowledge. Let us examine these problems in some detail.

British officers in the Indian Army require a thorough colloquial knowledge of simple Hindustani with a range of between



1,000 and 1,500 words. As grammatically correct but simple Hindustani is much better understood than anything else, a study of grammar will greatly facilitate matters. In addition to being able to speak and understand, officers must be able to read and write Roman-Hindustani. *There is no need for officers to read or write the Urdu or Devanagri scripts.*

To acquire this knowledge, three types of books are required:

(a) A simple standardized Roman-Hindustani grammar with exercises; this grammar should have a range of a total of 800 words; (b) Graduated reading books, the first one introducing 800 words only and the last one 1,500—2,000. About seven such books would be required. They would all be provided with vocabularies and (c) A small Roman-Hindustani-English and English-Roman-Hindustani dictionary containing about 5,000 words with blank pages for additions.

This sounds simple enough but it is complicated by the fact that although the great majority agree about the extent to which Army officers should learn Hindustani, there is a formidable body of opinion which argues that Hindustani can best be learned through the medium of the Perso-Arabic or Devanagri characters, although these characters need never be used afterwards. I shall postpone discussion of this remarkable misapprehension until later.

After spending four months with my battalion, I was told that I had been selected to fill the post of Attaché to "Q" Branch at Command H.Q. This seemed to suggest either that I had been given up as hopeless, or that I was now considered to be up to standard as a regimental officer. My enquiries as to which of these solutions was the correct one met with a cold reception and I am still in the dark about the matter. I think it must have been decided that I was now such an efficient regimental officer that another 6½ years away from my regiment would do no harm, for that was the period which elapsed before I again joined my battalion. I had done no military duty in the interval and the intelligent and experienced reader will be able to judge of my efficiency on this my second appearance.

Oddly enough, though I had only performed four months regimental duty in 12 years, I was this time received with hardly any misgiving. I was myself considerably perturbed for this time my station was to be Quetta with its terrible reputation for military activity of every kind. A few days after my arrival I asked for a formal interview with my C. O. and explained how diffident



I felt at appearing in this busy military centre so miserably equipped as regards training. A roguish twinkle appeared in my C. O.'s eye as he replied: "I think you are worrying yourself unnecessarily, and I should like to tell you three things. The first is that there is very little to learn, the second is that I am sure you will learn it very quickly, and the third is that if you don't it won't matter the least bit." I took this with a grain of salt as no doubt I was meant to do, but it was agreeable to know that I was going to work under a man with a sense of humour.

With only one break, I had been employed in various Intelligence appointments for nearly twelve years and was a little taken aback when the adjutant told me he had put my name down for the next Intelligence Course. This was not due to begin for two months and I suddenly conceived the idea of trying to pass my "C" Promotion Examination in the meanwhile. It was mid-winter and no field training was being done. However, with one of Gale and Polden's little books and with some valuable advice from my brother officers, I managed to pass a practical examination on duties in the field entirely on theory. Flushed with this success, I "proceeded" on the Intelligence Course where I learned many strange things and that done, began to work for the Urdu Interpretership and for my "D" Promotion Examination.

The Urdu and Hindi Interpretership Examinations demand a higher standard of knowledge than that which the ordinary Indian Army officer need possess. The characters must be read and written with some fluency, and there are set text-books of considerable difficulty. On the whole, the test is a good one but certain improvements might be made. The text-books should have complete vocabularies and notes, but not translations. At present the Urdu text-books have translations and glossaries and no vocabularies, while the Hindi books have neither. Any one who has passed the Urdu Interpretership can pass the Hindi equivalent in a few months without employing a *munshi*. All he has to do is to learn the Nagri character which is easy, read the really interesting text-books and do some compositions. The reward of Rs. 1,200 is very easy money. What is really required is a *Hindustani* Interpretership in which candidates must have a knowledge of both characters and have a good range of Sanscrit as well as Arabic and Persian vocabulary. Pieces of translation would be set from both Urdu and Hindi, but composition and conversation would be in Urdu only. The same principle should

be applied to the Degree of Honour; both these examinations should aim at producing a general knowledge of the intellectual expression of Northern India, both Muslim and Hindu.

At the first attempt, I only obtained a Second Class Interpretship as I had to give up a good deal of time to Promotion Examinations, Company Training and other difficult matters. Six months later I passed First Class and found my increased knowledge of colloquial Hindustani invaluable. On Battalion and Brigade Training I found that I could explain the orders to my Indian officers in rapid detail; they usually knew by experience how they ought to be carried out, and I was thus saved from being caught out on many occasions. By concentrating on the higher form of the language, however, I partly restricted my intercourse to Indian officers and the better educated N.C.O.s, and frequently found sepoy difficult to understand. They seldom had any difficulty in understanding me for I spoke more or less grammatically.

To meet the need which I felt for conversation with civilians as opposed to soldiers I asked the advice of Mr. Beatty from whose incomparable knowledge of Hindustani I had profited on more than one occasion. With unerring skill, Mr. Beatty put me in touch with a gentleman, a Test Auditor in the C.M.A.'s office and a Kayasth who had a superb knowledge of the language. I went to his house three or four times a week and talked at length with him and his friends who included pundits, lawyers and doctors. They all knew English thoroughly, but made a point of speaking nothing but Hindustani. Apart from the language I learnt many things from these excellent people, among others that education is the only thing which can bridge the communal gulf, that the average Indian civilian is completely ignorant of conditions in the Indian Army which he believes to be a body of mercenaries groaning under a system amounting to slavery, and that almost all differences between Europeans and Indians could be settled by mutual sympathy, or what my friend simply, and somehow embarrassingly, described as "love."

In 1934 I went to command the detachment in Hindubagh. For the first few months I spent my leisure in studying Pushtu, but I found the acquisition of this virile language through the medium of artificially compiled text-books, a laborious and boring process and soon gave it up in favour of Hindi.

I have already said that although Urdu cannot be described as the language of the Muslims, Hindi can truly be called the

language of the Hindus. There is, moreover, an atmosphere about Hindi which is essentially Indian. The Devanagri character represents a perfect system of phonetics and is essentially Aryan in that it is written from left to right and uses symbols for both short and long vowels. The Arabic character, on the other hand, by virtue of its being written from right to left and of its lack of symbols for short vowels, has an atmosphere which is essentially Semitic, for these characteristics are only found in Semitic languages. When I began my Hindi studies, I became aware of a remarkable fact. During my efforts to learn Urdu none of the Muslim Indian officers or men of the battalion had taken any interest in my studies, nor did they display any interest in discussing matters of Muslim law or history. Directly I began Hindi, however, the Hindu officers and men took a lively, at times almost embarrassing, interest in my work. They were ready to discuss Hindu mythology and theology for hours on end, and sepoys constantly brought me their copies of the Ramayan and other books to look at. At one time practically every man in the detachment who could write regaled me with specimens of his calligraphy. I also found to my great surprise that my knowledge of Hindi made it much easier to talk to Punjabi Muslims for, generally speaking, the *common* words of Hindustani are Hindi.

But these gratifying revelations were accompanied by another of a more disappointing kind. I found that "*theth*" Hindi is a more or less artificial growth. It is hardly spoken at all by educated people, except in literary circles. Many Hindi newspapers make a point of never using any word which is not of pure Hindi or Sanscrit origin, and thus produce a language which is forced and takes no account of usage. A number of Arabic and Persian words have been finally accepted into Hindustani and are used by Hindus and Muslims alike. An instance of this is the word "*kitab*." It is merely pedantic to use the word "*pustak*" unless a religious book is referred to. There is, however, a growing body of opinion which regards usage as of paramount importance. It is well known that Tulsi Das used many Arabic words and so, much later, has that great writer, Prem Chand.

Generally speaking, I found Hindi incomparably more interesting than Urdu. I would even go so far as to say that it is impossible to understand Northern India without a knowledge of Hindi and of Hindu philosophy. The student of Hindi cannot fail to imbibe something of the spirit of "*Bharat-varsh*" which is so different from the "*Hindustan*" of the Moguls. If he reads

Tulsi Das' Ramayan and the Hindi version of the Mahabharata, he will begin to see that India "means intensely, and it means good." He will understand the essential beauty of Vedic India and will learn that Hinduism is something more than a jumble of superstitions about a thousand hideous gods. He will learn the meaning of Brahma and Paratma, and he will learn the virile nobility of the character of Krishna.

I well remember an interesting discussion during dinner in a very average Officers' Mess. The talk had turned to the subject of what interest was uppermost in the Rajput sepoy's mind. Some said hockey, some said his piece of land and some promotion. I ventured the notion that what really lay nearest his heart was the Ramayan of Tulsi Das. There was an awkward pause. Then someone asked if Tulsi Das was not a *bania* in the bazaar. I explained briefly who he was and one and all said that the sepoys would never have heard of him. At their own suggestion, I called in a Rajput orderly on duty at the Mess, and asked him who Tulsi Das was. When he had made sure that he had heard aright, the man's face cleared. At last he had been asked a question to which he really knew the answer. He told us who Tulsi Das was, and it took him about ten minutes.

I put the finishing touches to my Hindi in the United Provinces where I obtained the services of an Almora Brahmin who knew no English. I was, indeed, the first Englishman he had ever spoken to. Another of my *gurus* was a S.D.O. in the M.E.S., who was an able exponent of Yogi philosophy. Under his direction I learnt to "think about nothing" for about two seconds. It is extremely difficult and it had the effect of making me feel very ill.

When I had qualified as a First Class Interpreter in Hindi I began to read for the Degree of Honour in Urdu. My reasons were, I fear, largely mercenary, for the reward offered was high. I found "Taubat-i-Nasuh" interesting and "Fasáná-i-Azád" amusing, but the poetry I could not stomach. My teacher, though painstaking, had the wrong idea. He corrected my rendering "the gleaming bosom of my beloved" to "my friend's white chest." I struggled on through the middle of the hot weather and would, I think, have given it up even if a reprieve had not come in the shape of a summons to Simla. That was the end, for some years, of my Hindustani studies, but I do not, like some others who have taken up non-Indian languages, affect to despise Hindustani, and I am still convinced that in a knowledge of Hindi lies the key to the knowledge of India and her problems.

In the early part of this article I referred to the mistaken notion that Hindustani is best learnt through the medium of the Perso-Arabic or Devanagri scripts. The theory expressed is that while Latinization may be all very well for those who know the language already, it gravely complicates matters for those learning it for the first time. The reason given for this is that the student, if his own language is one written in the Latin character, will be inclined to give his own phonetic values to letters which are the same as those of his own tongue. This apparently formidable theory requires closer analysis before it can be accepted. It is generally admitted that similarities or differences among languages must be fixed rather by *sound* than by *sign*. That the French *ch* is pronounced like the English *sh*, and the German *ee*, *j* and *w* like the English *ay*, *y* and *v* are merely a few illustrations among thousands of a very common linguistic phenomenon. Another common phenomenon is that one language may contain several sounds unknown to two or three others. Ignoring the finer nuances, it may be mentioned that French has no equivalent for the English *th*, *ch* and *j*; the Modern Greek cannot pronounce without difficulty *b*, *j*, *sh* or *ch*. English itself is very weak in gutturals. There is, therefore, nothing new or exceptional in the fact that oriental languages have certain sounds which do not occur in the languages with which we are most familiar. The Turkish phonetic Latin alphabet gives 28 symbols for all the sounds used in Turkish. Of these sounds only two, the nasal *g* and the hard *i* (written in Turkish as undotted *i*), are not found in English, French, German or Italian. Of the remaining 26 sounds, 24 are found in English and the other two, *ö* and *ü*, in German, and are very easily acquired. Without addition of the Persian letters *pe*, *chim*, *zhe* and *gaf* the Arabic alphabet can only express 20 of the Turkish sounds.

In Urdu a greater number of unusual sounds can be found. The Arabic sounds of *ghain* and *qaf* (still approximately pronounced in Urdu), the hard *t*, *d* and *r*, the hard and soft *th*, *dh* and the aspirated *k*, *p*, *g*, *b*, *j* and *ch* cannot be found in the more common European languages. Nor, with the exception of the first two, can they be found in Arabic, which also lacks *p* and *ch* and adequate means of expressing *o*, *ai*, *au*, *g* and nasal *n*. Indeed, easily to express all the sounds of Urdu in any known alphabet (Devanagri excepted) is a matter of extreme difficulty, and the solution of this difficulty which seems to appeal least to the imagination is the use of a character inseparably bound up



with a system of phonetics as foreign to Urdu as it is to the great majority of the world's languages. All that can be done with the Arabic alphabet to indicate the sounds which it lacks is to add new letters by means of dots, a device which can as easily be employed in the Latin alphabet. Aspiration is unknown in Arabic phonetics, whereas it is common in Aryan languages. Finally, the Arabic method of indicating vowels and diphthongs is totally inadequate to meet the demands of Urdu. To all this must be added the collateral difficulties of the initial, medial and final forms of the Arabic characters and the fact that they are written from right to left. As in Persian, a foreigner wishing to obtain a complete knowledge of written Urdu would have to learn the Arabic character to which literature is at present confined, but those whose wish or duty it is to learn the language colloquially and to read only Romanized Urdu would, it is my belief, do much better to study the language through the medium of a suitably modified Latin alphabet.

What, it may be asked, of the Sanscrit or Devanagiri character which has existed in India for countless centuries and is still widely used by Hindus all over the country? Is it suited for the writing of Urdu? The answer is that it is admirably suited. It represents what is probably the most perfect system of phonetics ever known. Besides expressing all the Aryan sounds of Persian and Hindi, it can exactly express all the Arabic vowel sounds and all the Arabic consonants (as sounded in Urdu) except *kha*, *fa*, *ghain*, *qaf* and the *z* sounds, and these are all easily expressed by under-dotting the Nagri aspirated *k*, *g* and *p* and the simple Nagri *k* and *j*.

Unfortunately, however, there are many serious objections to the universal application of the Nagri script to Urdu. The Arabic script was arbitrarily introduced during the despotic rule of the Moguls. The very suggestion that Indian Moslems should now write Urdu in Nagri would open up a whole range of problems even to visualize which is quite outside the scope of this article.

I shall not here give a list of books as I have done in previous articles. There are many grammars, dictionaries, reading books, manuals and books of idioms. The best advice available on this subject can be obtained from the Secretary to the Board of Examiners and I do not want to complicate his already difficult task by making suggestions with which he might disagree.

One word of advice on syntax. The key to Hindustani syntax is the adjectival use of the relative. When an Indian wants to say: "The letter which I wrote did not arrive," he never begins, like most Europeans: "Wuh chitthi . . . ." It is always "Jo chitthi main ne likhi thi, wuh nahin ayi."

## "A BLIND MAN SAT DOWN"

BY "ZARIF"

*"Ani chhur lam tál táh kanshih dyuthus ndh."  
A blind man sat down behind a pile of stones and thought  
that nobody had seen him.*

—Kashmiri Proverb.

"He cannot be very far ahead of us now, Ram Lall."

Henderson halted at the top of the pass and sat on a rock to study the pineclad hills falling away below him. At the bottom of the valley, four thousand feet below, flowed the river Beas like a silver snake. To the left stood the gaunt line of the Chamba snows, cold, grim, forbidding; a jagged outline clear-cut against the brilliant blue of the sky. Above were a few vast fleecy clouds, immense tufts of cotton-wool dabbed on the blue blanket of Heaven. Vultures, minute specks at some immeasurable height, wheeled still-winged, keen-eyed, aloof from the earth.

"Hán, Huzoor!" The Dogra orderly smiled, a flash of teeth beneath a fierce black moustache. "Not so very far now. And when we find him—," he spat contemptuously, and quoted the native proverb, "he will be beheaded like the bitter end of a cucumber."

"Yes!" Henderson lit a cigarette slowly. "When we find him."

For five days Henderson and his orderly, with two coolies carrying their meagre baggage, had been travelling swiftly on the trail of Sher Ali Khan who had murdered Sir Urquhart M'Ilwraith, Inspector-General of Police. It was a dastardly outrage, as undeserved as it was cowardly. A wild figure darkening the doorway of the bungalow; a flash; a deafening report—and the fine old man had fallen forward over the polished table. Henderson, his assistant, who had been dining with him, had whipped out his revolver and fired. It was too late. The murderer had gone.

Sher Ali Khan fled to the hills from Lahore, and Henderson followed swiftly, determined to bring him to trial, and to avenge his chief. Past the Shalimar gardens at Moghalpura led the trail; down the Grand Trunk road where the Emperor Jehangir had ridden a splendidly caparisoned elephant between the ranks of

several hundred of his errant son's supporters, whom the Emperor had impaled on stakes, compelling the miserable Prince to ride beside him and tell him the names of the writhing victims. Past Amritsar, the site of whose Golden Temple was granted by Akbar to the fourth *Guru*. Up to Pathankot, the railhead at the foot of the Himalayas.

Here the trail switched right-handed into the Kangra Valley to the little village of Goler with two adjacent wells, a glass of water from one of which is said to weigh twice as much as a glass from the other. Up to Kangra Fort, "the Fort of the Ear," where the legendary Jalandhara, son of the Ganges by the Ocean, was struck prostrate by the jealous goddess Devi; he fell with his head in the Kangra Valley, his ear under the fort, his mouth at Jawalamukhi, his back at Jullundur, and his feet at Multan. On again past Jawalamukhi, where the marble temple on the hill has no idol, but enshrines a perpetual flame of iridescent gas, which, tradition says, the great Akbar tried to extinguish by building a conduit from a neighbouring spring into the temple. On and on led the trail, up the mountainside to the pass whence the track drops down to the village of Bagani.

While Henderson sat waiting for the panting coolies to reach the top of the pass, he took a police circular from his pocket. "*Sher Ali Khan, son of Gulab Khan.*" The photograph showed a Muslim with a thick, black beard, a strong, evil face; but otherwise there was nothing distinctive about him. The slightest disguise would make him unrecognisable from a thousand other Muslims; but, it was stated, he had a star-shaped mole on his left shoulder. Henderson grunted. It would be easy enough to identify the man once he was arrested, but it was impossible to examine the left shoulder of every Muslim in the foothills of the Himalayas. It was unlikely that Henderson would get a glimpse of that damning blemish until he had caught his man; and Sher Ali Khan was cunning.

Frowning thoughtfully, Henderson folded away the circular, pulled out a map, and examined the landscape in front of him. "That," he observed, pointing to a tiny collection of houses some five miles off, "must be Bagani; and, two miles further on, on top of that sugar-loaf peak on the far side of the river, should be Bhambla Rest House." Ram Lall nodded his head in agreement, and gazed at the spot through puckered eyelids. Henderson stood up and began the descent, following the narrow goat-track which twisted among the rocks, dropping steeply down to the

pine forest below. It was difficult country, but they had covered a steady thirty miles a day in their pursuit. Ram Lall's eyes flickered constantly over the countryside. He knew Sher Ali Khan to be a skilled shot, and he had no wish that either he or his Sahib should be "shot like a rabbit in a ride." Down they dropped to the warmer and more cultivated regions of terraced fields of wheat and rice, with hardy little cultivators squatting amid their crops performing mysterious rites with iron tools and pieces of gaudy rag. Down to the valley-bed, where they drew aside for a moment to watch some women worshipping Vasudeva-Krishna in the form of a *pipal* tree, pouring water on its trunk, walking round it a hundred and eight times in the course of the sun, and laying at its roots a copper coin, a Brahminical cord and sweetmeats. Ram Lall volunteered the prediction that it would be a new moon that night; it was only when the new moon fell on a Monday that this rite was performed. "Presently," he said, "an old woman will recite the tale of Satyavati, whose mother was a fish, and became, by Parasara the Rishi, mother of Vyasa who compiled the Vedas. But who wants to hear that tale again? These old women are full of tales. They try to make one believe in the *bis-cobra*, whose bite is fatal even to a man's shadow. And they say that the "Did-he-do-it" bird sleeps on its back with its legs in the air lest the heavens should fall upon it during the night." So they two went on together to the village of Bagani.

Here Henderson called another halt; there might be news. He went up to the raised stone platform which surrounded the largest tree in the village, the *tharri* where all the village gossip is to be heard while one rests in the shade. From this point of vantage every passer-by could be seen and engaged in conversation.

Henderson hoisted himself up and sat on the edge of the *tharri*. He lit a cigarette and smoked for some minutes in silence. Ram Lall cuffed a small boy and told him to call the *lambardar*. A collection of curious villagers gathered, standing round Henderson to stare unblinkingly, mouths agape.

Close-by, a sleepy-looking individual sat huddled in a dirty cotton sheet, pulling rhythmically at his *huqqa*, gazing straight before him. He was an oldish man, a Hindu, with a dirty shirt, ill-fitting cotton pantaloons and a small lace cap. His forehead was deeply lined with caste-marks. He looked as though he had not moved from his position for some hours. "Ho, brother!" said Henderson, "You look very wise and observant. Hast thou



seen a Muslim, a stranger, passing through this village, perhaps six hours gone?"

The man slowly removed the mouthpiece of the *huqqa* an inch from his lips, gazed uncomprehendingly at Henderson for a moment until he seemed to realise that he was being addressed. "Hán-jí?" Henderson patiently repeated his question. The man smiled toothlessly, and wagged a hand, palm foremost. "*Angrezi nahin jántá, Sáhib.*" Henderson assured him that he could well believe that, but that he had not been addressing him in English; he had used a most fluent vernacular.

On hearing the question for the third time, and after it had been repeated to him by several of the onlookers, the man thought for some time, spat reflectively, and shook his head. "Nahín, Huzoor!" "Think again, brother," said Henderson softly. The *huqqa* bubbled furiously. The man expelled a puff of acrid smoke, wiped his mouth on the back of a horny hand, and addressed himself to Ram Lall; the *Sáhib* obviously could not understand. "Nahín! All day have I sat on this *tharri*, but it is too high to see anyone."

Ram Lall snorted, and looked keenly at the man's bloodshot eyes. "Oh worthless son of a noseless mother!" he mocked, "it is not the height of the *tharri* which has made thee blind, but the depth of the *tharri* (strong liquor) which thou hast drunk!" The ripple of laughter from the villagers which met this sally was interrupted by the arrival of the headman, who came bowing and scraping in an agony of apprehension. The arrival of a Police *Sáhib* in the village must surely mean trouble. Could it be that the Police had heard about his very natural confiscation of Masti Lalita's savings, or—but what was the *Sáhib* saying? A Muslim *badmásh*, passing through the village? He broke into voluble speech. "Oh, but yes! It must have been just before midday that the pig of an outcaste had passed through the village and showered curses upon us. He answered none of our enquiries.

When we offered him food and rest—not knowing who he was, of course—he spat upon us and went his way. After he had passed, I said to my wife's cousin's son "Surely that is an evil rascal." Had I but known that your Honour wanted him, I would without doubt have detained him."

"Without doubt!" agreed Henderson, heaving himself off the *tharri* to put an end to the chatter of this garrulous old man.

Calling to his coolies to follow, he strode out of the village, crossed the river by the crazy wooden pile-bridge which was swept



away every year by the spate, and began the steep ascent to the Rest House on the sugar-loaf peak. His path was cut into the face of an almost sheer cliff. Half way up the track, he noticed, lying in his path, a piece of paper wrapped about a stone. Picking it up, he smoothed out the paper. It was a copy of the very Police circular which he had in his own pocket. On it was written a message in the vernacular: "*Let not the well of courage be muddied with the stick of foolhardiness. Go back. Sher Ali Khan.*"

"Our friend seems to be finding the pace a little too hot for him," thought Henderson. This message, combined with the news which the *lambardar* of Bagani had provided, showed that the man was somewhere near. It remained now but to find him. Henderson did not mind whether he caught him dead or alive, but he was determined to have the man's body, and he would search unceasingly until he found him. He continued his climb up the steep path, and arrived at the little plateau on the top where the small Rest House had been built. The bungalow was locked, and there was no sign of life anywhere. "Go and call the *chowkidar*, Ram Lall," said Henderson, as he sat wearily down on the stone verandah, his legs dangling over the edge. He pulled out his notecase and examined a list of all the *chowkidars* of the various Rest Houses in the district.

Then he gave himself up to the contemplation of the landscape. The sun, a great crimson globe, was sinking down behind the majestic hills in a blaze of glory. The shadows of the evening had lengthened, making the green tones of the pine forest even richer than before. It was very lovely, very peaceful.

A soft step behind him brought Henderson to his feet.

There stood the *chowkidar*, a middle-aged Hindu of surly aspect. "Hullo, *chowkidar*!" said Henderson cheerfully. "Can I spend the night here? Good!" He pulled the list from his notebook and consulted it. "Let me see . . . Bhambla Rest House. . . . I suppose you are *chowkidar* Shib Ram?" "Huzoor!" The *chowkidar* made a deep salam. "Well, Shib Ram it's a grand spot here. Open the bungalow for me, will you, and let my coolies dump my kit inside. I've got all my food with me, so I shan't want anything except a lamp. I've got to go on again early to-morrow morning, so I want to get dossed down to-night as soon as I can. By the way, I suppose you haven't seen an unpleasant-looking Muslim *badmash* round here

to-day, have you? He's got a penchant for committing particularly foul murders." The *chowkidar* shook his head, and assured Henderson that no one had been to the Rest House for nearly three months. "Yes," thought Henderson, "and you've been asleep all day, I'll bet!" "Well, never mind," he added aloud, "Get me that lamp, will you, and get the bungalow opened up."

Henderson sat down again on the verandah, watching the last passionate glories of the sunset. There was a tall mountain ash growing beside the Rest House, a blaze of vermillion blossom which the richness of the evening glow warmed into flame. Henderson, gazing at this tree, marvelled at the beauty of it. It was perfect; almost too perfect to be real. Suddenly he cocked his head on one side and listened. There was a rushing sound, the sound which teal make coming down to the water, the sound which a shell makes as it tears through the air. The next instant a vulture alighted awkwardly in the tree and folded up its wings. It cocked an eye at Henderson, and then gazed away over the roof of the bungalow. It was very early for vultures to come down to roost, thought Henderson; and anyhow, did they come down as low as this at this time of the year? He walked out of the verandah, and stood staring up into the sky.

A fat yellow planet winked slowly at him; was it Venus, or Saturn?—he could never tell. Another vulture joined the first; then two more came, alighting directly onto the roof, and walked out into the middle of it, out of sight.

He could hear their talons scratching on the corrugated iron as they walked with that peculiar stiff-legged hopping gait. "Odd!", he thought.

He went back into the bungalow, where Ram Lall was arranging his luggage. The *chowkidar* came in, bearing a bundle of firewood and tinder which he thrust into the hearth and kindled with much puffing and blowing. The first feeble flicker soon gained courage, and presently there was a roaring blaze of sweet-smelling pine-logs, making the whole room more cheerful. "That's better," said Henderson, pulling a long cane chair nearer to the fire, and settling himself down comfortably.

"Does the Sahib want anything more?" asked the *chowkidar*.

"Nothing, thanks very much, said Henderson, giving him a wave of dismissal. The *chowkidar* salaamed and turned to go.

"Oh, Shib Ram!" said Henderson, "Sher Ali Khan..." The *chowkidar* stopped with his hand on the door and looked back.

"...Sher Ali Khan is the name of the man I was telling you about. Let me know if you hear anything about him to-night. That's all. Good night!" The *chowkidar* salaamed again, and shuffled out of the room.

Presently Henderson got up, told Ram Lall to go to bed and to call him at six the next morning. Then he sat down to supper.

\* \* \* \*

Ram Lall sat down in the *chowkidar's* hut.

"Ho, *chowkidar*!" said he, in his loftiest tone. "Fetch me some wood, some water, some flour and butter instantly."

The *chowkidar* glared at him. The insufferable insolence of these underlings! The obsequious manner which he had used before the Sahib was gone. "Fill your belly with what you can, Toady! I give you nothing!"

Ram Lall stared in astonishment. Was that the way to speak to a foot-constable? He bridled. "Do as I order at once!"

The *chowkidar* walked over to Ram Lall and stood in front of him, his face close to the other's. "Understand this, policeman! I am not *your* servant to be ordered about by any dog of an un . . ." He checked himself suddenly as Ram Lall's hand closed over the butt of his pistol. "I go to get thee food," he said in a voice which was dull and toneless. "One cannot rebel against such tyranny as this." He bent his head and left the hut.

Ram Lall, very satisfied with the obvious impression his high-handed manner had made, squatted on his hunkers and lit a cigarette. Lifting his *pagri* carefully off his head, he hung it on a nail, unbuckled his belt, and prepared to enjoy himself. The *chowkidar* returned, bringing food, which he put on the floor at a little distance from the orderly.

"The price of these things is annas three, policeman. Pay me the reckoning, and I give thee the food."

Ram Lall chuckled, rose to his feet and picked up the food himself. "Let the sum be added to my Sahib's bill. He is rich." He laughed carelessly. The *chowkidar's* eyes narrowed. He retired to his corner of the hut, where he lay down on his charpoy and rolled himself up in a blanket.

Ram Lall busied himself with his cooking, and in a short time he had made himself a steaming *chappatti*, which he stuffed into his mouth in great handfuls.

"Ho, brother," he said more graciously, when his stomach was filled, "from what country dost thou come?"

The chowkidar grunted. He was clearly resenting the former high-handed manner of the orderly.

"Dost thou come from Gurdaspur?" persisted the constable.

"Nahin. I have been to those parts, but the water is bad and I do not like the heat," grumbled the other at last.

"My brother's wife's father comes from Gurdaspur," prattled the policeman, lighting another cigarette from a glowing ember of wood and breathing in a strong mixture of smoke and air. "I went up there once; but it was a poor country. Where is your village?"

There was no reply. The *chowkidar* was lying on his bed, staring at nothing. "Ho brother! I asked thee where is thy village?"

"I come from Goler way," growled the man.

"Ah, I know not Goler. But I went once to the fair at Narihana in the course of my official duties, and I believe Narihana is very close to Goler."

There was a short silence.

"There is a very good temple at Narihana," continued Ram Lall presently, "a temple to Shivaji. Knowest thou the pundit there, one Pír Jaimal Nath?"

The *chowkidar* grunted. "Without doubt. It was he who invested me with the *janeo* (sacred thread)." He laughed shortly. "Yes, he gave me the *janeo*." He chuckled away to himself.

Ram Lall washed his hands ceremoniously in a pannikin of water, muttered a prayer to Shiva, and rolled himself up in his blankets. "Ah, Pír Jaimal Nath is a good man," he continued. "So he performed the *upanyana* for you, did he?"

The *chowkidar* grunted. "Peace to all this chatter. The night was made for sleep." He turned out the lantern.

Ram Lall rolled over in his blankets so that he faced the other man; but the hut was so dark that he could only just see his outline. He began to breathe heavily; but he did not sleep, for just then Ram Lall was thinking harder than he had ever thought before. "Now all this is very strange talk," he said to himself. "Here is a man who says that he comes from Goler. He also agrees that the Pundit of Narihana is Pír Jaimal Nath, and that this pundit had invested him with the *janeo*. But Pír Jaimal Nath is my own *parohit*, whose name I merely gave to test him. *Brahmchári* Kirroo, my wife's uncle, is Pundit of Narihana since the last forty-three years. Now how can this thing be?"

He lay there, turning this problem over in his mind.

"What was it the man said to me in his anger? What was it that he said when I very rightly ordered him to get me some food?

Surely he said, 'Understand this, policeman, I am not *your* servant to be ordered about by any dog of an un...!' Now what was that word he was going to say? Could it—could it have been 'Unbeliever'?"

Ram Lall's brain stretched almost to cracking point. Could it be that Shib Ram was not a Hindu at all, *but a Mohamedan?*

But this must be nonsense. He had said that he had undergone the ceremony of the *upanyana*, and no Mohamedan would know of that. But *had* he said so? No, he said that he had been invested with the *janeo*, which every Mahomedan knew about. It was he, Ram Lall, who had mentioned the *upanyana*, and the man had made no satisfactory reply.

"Policeman?"

What was that? Had the *chowkidar* whispered to him? Or was his imagination playing tricks? Where was his police training?

He must breathe, breathe, breathe regularly.

"Policeman!" There it was again. So the *man* had called!

Well, he would not answer. He would watch. And he would pretend to be asleep. He must breathe, breathe, breathe regularly.

Ram Lall strained his eyes to watch. Although his breath came with the slow rhythm of a sleeping man, his heart was pounding madly against his ribs.

A shadow slipped out of the door. The man had gone.

Quickly the orderly rose to his feet, flitted silently through the doorway, and paused outside, uncertain which way the man had gone. With every nerve strained he listened, but he could hear nothing save a lone dog barking down in the valley. The new moon, the merest slip of silver in a pitch-black sky, had already sunk very low. The night was absolutely dark save for the pale pin-points of early starlight.

There! Surely a shadow had moved! Away up towards the bungalow! What did that man want up there at this time of night? The house was in darkness. Henderson Sahib was asleep. Ram Lall decided that he must go up there at once to investigate. That man was up to no good.

Keeping in the deeper shadows, pausing every few paces to listen, the orderly crept along the path. His heart was pounding



loudly; his breath coming in such snatches that his ears buzzed when he swallowed. Desperately he fought to listen.

What was that in the doorway of Henderson Sahib's room?

Was it a man? Ram Lall stared and stared. Could he see a vague suggestion of a man's outline in the doorway, or was his imagination mocking him?

And then his heart missed a beat; the back of his mouth arched and became suddenly dry. He had seen a glint, just the merest moving glint for a fraction of a second. The man *was* standing in the doorway of Henderson Sahib's room. And Henderson Sahib was asleep. The man's heavy revolver crashed in the night, shattering the silence.

Ram Lall rushed forward as the man came running swiftly away from the house. Instinctively Ram Lall put out his foot. The man tripped, and fell heavily, the revolver flying out of his hand to skid away in the bushes. The orderly flung himself on the prostrate figure, and tried to grapple with him. But the man was too strong. In a trice he had twisted out of the orderly's grasp, and was gripping him round the throat, choking him, throttling him. Ram Lall wrenched his head away, and yelled with all his might. "Sahib! Sahib!!!" And then, in an agony of despair, he remembered that his Sahib had been murdered, and that he was now all alone at the mercy of this same murderer.

A dark figure dropped down from the roof of the verandah and ran towards them. There was a click, and the man was securely handcuffed.

"Bring him into the house," said Henderson brushing the dust off his coat. Gasping, Ram Lall kicked the figure to its feet, and dragged it into the room.

"And now let's see what we've caught," said Henderson, lighting the lamp, and turning to look at his captive.

"Ah! Our friend the *chowkidar*!" Henderson strode up to him, seized the man's shirt and ripped it back from the left shoulder.

There, on the brown skin, was a livid star-shaped mole.

\* \* \* \*

"Yes, it was the vultures who began it," said Henderson, reclining in a long chair at Headquarters some days later. "I couldn't think what they were up to on that roof, so I went up to have a look. There I found the newly murdered body of the real *chowkidar*, poor old Shib Ram. He had been shot through the head, and his clothes had been taken away, leaving him a stark

corpse for the vultures to dispose of. Then I recollected that the man who had claimed to be the *chowkidar* had got a blotchy complexion, just such a one as a man has after he has shaved off a thick beard. And then I remembered that when I had addressed him as Shib Ram he had not seemed to hear; but when I called the name "Sher Ali Khan" he jumped as though he had been stung. It was a clever idea, murdering the *chowkidar*, taking his clothes and impersonating him. Who would expect a Muslim to impersonate a Hindu? He'd have probably got away with it if he had not been in such a hurry. And so he was like the man in the proverb, "A blind man sat down." But the vultures saw him. It was certainly lucky for me that I happened to be up on the roof when the blighter shot at my rolled up valise on the bed—drilled it clean through. He always was a fine shot. I should probably have had another long chase after him if my orderly hadn't been there to trip him up.

I still cannot quite understand how Ram Lall came to be in just the right spot at the right moment. He's pretty thick in the head as a rule, but I've put him in for a medal for this "

## CAIRO CONVERSATION

By "ZAMALEK"

The stone-flagged terrace between the Continental Hotel and the street was dotted with chairs and small tables. Most of them were occupied by parties of officers, with some of whom there were nursing sisters in their grey uniforms. Here and there sat parties of civilians; they might have been of almost any nationality but English—and probably were. In the street below passed the usual unending crowd of Egyptian men and women. Many of the latter still wore the veil, which might have been invented by Norman Hartnell, for it hides their ugly noses and over-large mouths and lets only their eyes be seen; their eyes are sometimes pretty. In this crowd was a number of khaki-clad soldiers from all parts of the Empire, wearing serge or battle-dress. A few were sun-burnt deeper than brown, and these had come in from the desert. They were fit—and more than fit, hard—because of the climate and conditions of the desert. Some were pale and looked weary; they worked in military offices which had once been flats inhabited by the professional classes. The offices did not all work in the afternoon, so at this hour they too were able to see the sun for three or four hours.

At a table in a corner five officers sat and talked. Four were burnt brown, the fifth looked like the sub-stone slugs that gardeners meet when they dig new soil. He wore an arm-band and had ink on his fingers. His trade was as apparent as those of his companions.

"I wish I was allowed to waste my youth driving a 'waddling fortress' or whatever you call your vehicle, into enemy camps." He spoke to one who held a beret on his knee. "It is a job that requires nothing but infinite patience and belief in the English manufacturer, and in both I excel."

"I realise that you're paid to reduce everything to its lowest terms, chiefly so that you can then understand it, but actually in this case you're not very far wrong."

The beret-holder thought for a moment. "We are much more skilled at the mechanics of our business than you could appreciate, but beyond that we're dependent on three things: the man who chooses our road into the enemy's camp, as you call it; the sapper who clears that road, and the infantrymen who follow

behind, or wherever they do follow. I reckon they come in about that order of importance too. The road in must be the least obstructed and the least expected, which is rather hard to spot sometimes though it is easier if they have tanks, as then they must have a road out for them, which, of course, is a road in for us if it can be found. The sappers who clear the road are the objects of my deepest veneration." One of the party bowed and smiled. "Oh, I didn't see you were here, still the others of your crowd are really quite good." He who had bowed took up the tale: "It is the worst job I know, going out before breakfast—long before too, which I hate—and behaving like a poacher surrounded by game-keepers, trying to find mines which don't hurt me personally amongst a lot of other mines which were invented solely to destroy me. In addition to all that I have to keep looking up to see that no one is stalking me through the night with a Bowie knife. I won't do it again unless I have an infantry escort, and even then I'd have to buy them some rubber shoes to keep them quiet."

"You forget that we're the Queen of the Battlefield" (the infantryman didn't look like one). "I know we are because I read it somewhere, though I can't remember where. You wouldn't expect a queen to go through the stealthy night felonies you're describing. We do our work openly and unashamed; we have to for the sake of history." He changed his tone: "As a matter of fact we're getting on, and I see signs of murderous work at night coming in quicker than it did in the last war. My C.O. even encouraged night training in peace-time and wasn't thought very "gauche" on that account. I believe that in quite a short time we could produce some quite useful guardians for you during your horrid work; but it would need a lot of training to get most of our men to work quite so gingerly at night. Also you'd probably touch off all your destructive works before we got clear, so that we'd get caught when everything opened up. But everyone regards us as an expendable store instead of the queen I read about." He sighed.

The last member of the quintet looked at the infantryman: "I don't regard you as an expendable store, in fact I've recently taken great trouble blowing a way for you into several enemy towns. Each time it was exactly like practice camp except that there were no safety precautions and I didn't have to stop as soon as I'd got on to the target. It's been a gunner's paradise so far to me and mine. In fact I've only met one man who seemed to

enjoy it more. He was an infantry soldier—shot through the hand—which hurts. He had obviously not slept, shaved or washed, for some time. He was sitting in a ditch with a certain amount of stuff going off all round him. I said, in the hope of cheering him up a bit, 'Its a pretty awful war, isn't it?' He smiled all over his face and said 'Yessir, but it's better than no war at all.' So I'd hate to think of him as expendable. But I was telling you about practice camp. . . ." The pale and ink-stained officer turned quickly to the sapper. "Your third factor—the infantry who go with you—well?" "Well, they vary," he said. "What we want is men who are devilish quick to follow and take over or help. We can't talk to them once we're on the move, and in any case they're usually too far behind, but you'd think it was pretty simple reasoning to reckon that if we stop or turn out of our course then we want something done. Now some infantry are wonderfully quick to come up and help, and others will wait till we've worked it all out for them. After all they've got carriers that can keep some sort of touch between us and their naked bodies behind. We don't expect them to go ahead of us, but if we have to change course to avoid something, we don't want to have to wait about whilst they decide to take over as far as we've gone. Then if we run into some unforeseen obstruction they can only help if they are there. It's flattering, of course, to be regarded as capable of doing everything unaided, which is what some of them do, but it's not the right view to take."

"I won't quarrel with that," said the infantryman, "but I think some of you are apt to get a wrong picture of what's going on outside your box. In fact I heard that several of your men have opened up because they thought it was all over bar the cheering, and then found that they've let in quite a little shower of bullets. There's so much British industry between you and the outside world that you're apt to become a bit detached from the facts of life."

The pale and inky officer pulled up his arm-band, a gesture that meant that he was going to say that he'd got to go back to work, but the former forestalled him.

"Back to it!" he said. The others laughed and went off—to get down to it, leisure and "coffee-housing" forgotten.



## BURMESE DAYS

BY OFFICER CADET NO. 269—J. M. GRANT

From 1935 to 1939 I had the good fortune to be stationed in Burma. I call it "good fortune" advisedly, as the country and people are among the most fascinating I have ever seen. My work took me over the entire country at frequent intervals, and brought me into contact with all types; and, as the Burman is invariably happy to tell the enquiring European all about the customs of the country, I was thus enabled to gather a considerable amount of information about peoples, manners and religion.

Though geographical descriptions are apt to be tedious, I might just mention that the country—until three years ago, incidentally, not a country at all, but a province of India—is some 1,300 miles long from north to south and about 600 miles wide at its broadest part. This represents an area considerably greater than that of France—before the war of course. The frontiers of the country are Tibet and Assam in the north, Yuman and Siam in the east, Malaya in the south, and the Bay of Bengal in the west. You will readily appreciate, therefore, that a country of this considerable extent will be exceedingly diverse in character—and so it is. In Upper Burma there are great dry zones of stunted scrub, wet zones of thick jungle, cultivated plains and slopes and, in the extreme north, a wilderness of frontier hills. Lower Burma consists largely of the rich, flat valley of the Irrawaddy, heavily cultivated; with the Delta, flat as a billiard-table as far as the eye can see, and with a labyrinth of channels, which used to make me wonder how on earth the launches and steamers of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company found their way about at all. As we go further south we find thickly wooded hills stretching Eastwards to Siam, and off the western seaboard, there are the thousand-and-one islands of the Merqui Archipelago. A leisurely sail through these in the little steamer which plies between Merqui and Rangoon is an experience one does not readily forget.

The peoples, too, are as diverse as the country, although they are all markedly Mongolian in type; and an ethnologist travelling from the Talaings in the South, through the Burmese of the middle country to the Karens, Shans, Chins, Kachins, Was, Arakanese and a dozen others, would find sufficient material for study

to last a few lifetimes. But over all this diversity there is an atmosphere which has an irresistible appeal for anyone who has ever been in Burma! An atmosphere of gaiety, of kindly tolerance, of hospitality, and, above all, of colour. For the Burmese—and by the term I now include all the races of the country—are essentially a colourful people. The imagery—I might almost say the fantasy—of their customs and legend, are reflected in their daily round, even in their dress, and nowhere will you find a more likeably colourful scene than at a Burma festival, however small and unimportant. To anyone going to Burma from India it is specially striking, for gone is the universal white of Indian clothing, to be replaced by all the colours of the spectrum. The bright yellow robes of the priests mingling with the crowd of gay loongyis (or skirts) worn by both sexes, make a constantly shifting kaleidoscope of colour which is in complete harmony with the gold of the pagodas, the intricate gilt carvings of the many-roofed buildings, and the brilliant reds and yellows of the flowering trees.

I have mentioned the imagery, the thread of fantasy which runs through Burmese life and customs, and nowhere is this better to be seen than in their religion. Although the Burman is nominally a Buddhist, there is even to-day a very strong strain of animism or spirit-worship closely interwoven with the "official" religion of the country. The number of these spirits or *Nats* as they are called is legion. There are the *Nat* brothers Shwe Byin Gyi and Shwe Byin Ngi, who are the most powerful of the spirits; there is the child *Nat* Ma Nemi who lives in the cradles of babies and makes them laugh; there is the Yin Gyi who was stolen away by nymphs because of his exquisite playing of the harp; there is Maung Tint De, the blacksmith of Tagaung: and about thirty others who are universally known and venerated all over the country. In addition, there are hundreds of lesser *Nats*, each with some particular fame in his own locality, for when anyone dies who has been celebrated during life, he generally becomes a *Nat* and his shade is venerated accordingly. There is one *Nat* to be found in the Southern Shan States, unique for the reason that he is an Englishman—or rather the departed spirit of one! This is a Mr. J. C. Greer of the I.C.S., who was so much liked and respected by the Shans during his life that on his death in 1915 they built a statue of him, and to-day he is one of the leading *Nats* in his district. I do not think his fame extends to other parts of the country, as I have only heard of him in the S.S.S.

The *Nats* I have mentioned are all of the fairly benevolent variety, but there are others which require to be very frequently propitiated if ill-luck is to be avoided. There is one in particular who is very fond of giving his victims a stomach-ache, and he must be very carefully propitiated. Indeed, the propitiation of the various unfriendly *Nats* is a daily affair with the unsophisticated villager, while his attendance at the pagoda is only a weekly one, or, rather like ourselves, even less often.

Another respect in which the imaginative nature of the Burman is apparent is in the place names of the country, many of which are very intriguing to the European. For instance, Hanthawaddy—"The district of the duck;" Shwe Nyaung Bin—"The Golden Banyan Tree Town;" Wa Sein Taung—"Green Bamboo Hill Town;" Myit-kyi na—"Near the Big River Town;" Ye-nan-gyaung—"Smelly water creek." Ye-nan-gyaung is of course the main oil-field of the Burmah Oil Co., but long before they came on the scene the Burmese were collecting the oil by means of crude shafts dug in the ground, and even before that by skimming it off the surface of pools where it exuded from outcroppings. One could go on mentioning these names by the score, for almost every place-name in Burma has its meaning, but I shall mention only two more. First Rangoon itself, which is really a corruption of the two Burmese words "*Yan-gon*" meaning "the end of the war." It was christened in 1755 by King Alaung-paya, who was rather pleased with himself at having driven the Talaungs into South Burma where they are to this day. Actually, it was by no means "the end of the war" as far as Rangoon was concerned, as some seventy years later there was very bloody fighting in the first Burmese War. And the last place-name I propose to mention is one which has never failed to amuse one. This is Pyin-ma-na, a thriving town in Upper Burma. The name means "Lazy people don't stay here!" I must say that on arriving there to stir up a sub-agent of my former employers, I was rather struck by the singular inappropriateness of the name.

As well as place-names, various times of the day have been rather originally christened. There is the time just before the dawn "when there is light enough to see the veins in the hand." Although of course the ordinary times of the day are used in the towns, even to-day in the country districts an hour of the day is indicated by a phrase giving some vague approximation only; such as "monks' begging time," about six or seven in the morning; "monks' returning time," about eight. "Sky-closing time," about

six P.M.; "brothers don't know each other time," just after dark; "lads go courting time," about 9 P.M., and "heads laying down time" about 10 P.M. in the country. It seems difficult to believe that phrases of the kind are actually used to-day, but such is the case. Burma of the country districts is a country singularly untouched by what we are pleased to call the march of progress. Duration of time, too, is measured in this manner. Thus "the length of a betel-chew" denotes about ten minutes, "The boiling of a pot of rice" about twenty minutes; so that if one is told that a certain event will take place in about "two pot-boils and a betel-chew" it does not require any great effort of mental arithmetic to work out the time. Measures of distance show this picturesque phraseology. Thus the phrase "a stone's throw" is as familiar to the Burman as to the Englishman; "the sound of a shot" indicated about half a mile, and rather a complicated one is "morning meals distance," i.e., as far as a man could walk between sunrise and breakfast time, say about six miles. So when any one asks what time you get up in Belgaum, tell him "when there is light enough to see the veins in the hand." If he has ever lived in Burma, he will understand!

It is rather interesting to follow the daily round of a Burman, and we might begin by taking an imaginary character whom we will christen "Maung Sein." Let us look first at his name itself. There is no such thing as a surname in Burma, and every male Burman is "Maung" something, the feminine equivalent being "Ma." The names actually used are comparatively few, and one sees, for example, in the *Burma Gazette* that some official who is designated as Maung Sein (35) has been transferred from Mandalay to Rangoon. The "35" does not refer to his age, but means that there are 34 other officials all called Maung Sein! Thus you might quite easily have, say, the D.C., the D.S.P. and four or five of their subordinates in the same station all called Mg. Sein, which must make official correspondence a trifle difficult at times. However, let us take our mythical Mg. Sein and consider him as a typical Burmese up-country youngster of quite poor-class parentage. He is of school age, but, unlike his Indian counter-part, he really does go to school. The Buddhist monks, as part of their religious duties, act as teachers, with the result that the standard of literacy in Burma is unusually high for the East. It is, as a matter of fact, 80 per cent., in sharp contrast to India, which, I think—although I am not quite sure of my figure here—is about 30 per cent. literate. Well, our young friend re-

ceives a good solid grounding in the Buddhist scriptures, and he learns to read and write, so that by the age of eight or nine he has received quite a decent primary education. Lots of the poorer class lads stop here of course, but the art of writing, once learned, is one that is not easily forgotten and, as for his reading, there are all the innumerable books of Buddhist lore and tales of the *Nats* and the heroes of olden days at his disposal without any charge whatsoever. If he stays on in school, as he is perfectly free to do, he receives a somewhat meagre grounding in arithmetic and secular learning generally, but always the bulk of the instruction in the monastery school is, of course, religious. We will suppose, however, that he has attended school for the minimum period necessary to learn to read and write, and that he has now gone back to help his father tend whatever patch of land he has. His work in the fields will never be strenuous, for no Burman will work any harder than is necessary to feed his family and leave a little over for a new *loongyi* and something to gamble with at the next festival. It is because of this attitude of his that we find most of the paddy land owned by Indians and worked by Indian labour. The Burman takes rather a poor view of this, but is much too lazy to do very much about it! Our young friend, then, has plenty of leisure and, as he is now growing up, he begins to think of becoming one of the lads of the village and particularly of making himself attractive to young Ma Shume Chi down the road. To this end he must get himself extensively tattooed, and, although this custom is not much observed in the town nowadays, it is still carried on extensively in the districts. The Burmese tattooing is none of your simple affairs of an anchor on the forearm, but a most elaborate effort indeed. When finished, the whole body from the waist to below the knees is a mass of intricate figures, the effect being rather that of a pair of skin-tight pants. In some parts of the Shan States, the tattooing is even more extensive and I have actually seen a Shan tattooed from neck to ankle—a somewhat unusual and intriguing sight.

He will pick out the girl of his choice and the courtship will run on lines more European than Oriental, for according to the Buddhist Law there are three ways in which a marriage may be brought about: When the parents of the couple give them to one another; when they meet through the good offices of a go-between; and when they arrange the matter between themselves. So there is little excuse for incompatibility in a Burmese marriage. The three sections seem to cover all possibilities. The



actual marriage ceremony is very simple and is purely secular. In fact, the celibate priests would be scandalised if asked to take any part in it. In most cases the mere presence of the marriage parties is enough to make the union "official," though nowadays some sort of simple ceremony is generally performed by the village headman. Polygamy is recognised and permitted, but is seldom practised now. Divorce is easy, and highly practical. For instance, the wife may obtain a divorce if the husband is poor and unable to support her; if he is always ailing; if he refuses to work, or if he cannot carry out his marital duties for any reason. And a man may divorce his wife if she has no male children, if she has no love for her husband, or if she persists in some course of action of which he disapproves. One would think that with divorce so easy it would be a frequent occurrence, but actually it is remarkably infrequent. In my opinion Burmese law on divorce is a deal more sensible than our own, and certainly seems to work well.

To return to our friends, Mg. Sein and Ma Shwe Chi. Their domestic life is simple. Their little patch of paddy supplies their needs. There is seldom any occasion for either to exert themselves unduly, and never any occasion for them to worry about the future. Their greatest excitement is a jolting journey in a ramshackle bus to some pagoda festival, their greatest ambition to see the village boat successful at the Tha-ding-yut races, or the champion fighting cock defeat all comers. And so an uneventful life drifts along. Our couple will care nothing for the European assertion that they lead a lazy, aimless life. They have enough to live on, and the writings of all their philosophies say that wealth only brings new cares. Who shall say they are wrong?

I have tried to give you some slight idea of the Burmese character and probably the chief impression you have got is that it is singularly deficient in the martial qualities. At the same time, the Burmese Army before and up to the time of the British annexation of Burma had many a campaign against the Chinese, Arakanese, Shans, Talaungs, etc., and despite a marked lack of discipline and bad leadership gave many a good account of itself. What it was capable of under good leadership I shall presently try to show, but first, by way of contrast, let me quote from a contemporary account of a review of the Burmese Army at the time of King Thebaw in the 1880's. The troops mustered at an early hour between the inner and outer stockades of the Palace at Mandalay. They fell in in a vague formation of fours, and talk-

ing, smoking and chewing betel went on *ad lib!* The Commander-in-Chief and other officers meanwhile assembled in the inner court and after some three or four hours waiting the King appeared on his balcony and "inspected" his forces for about three minutes through a field glass, the forces being then in the somewhat unmilitary position of grovelling on their stomachs! This over, the officers mounted their elephants, the N.C.O.'s said "He!" and the men started off in some sort of a procession. The various officers wore whatever uniform took their fancy and all were either smoking or chewing betel. Behind the C.-in-C. came his umbrella-bearers. Then came the minor officers on ponies, each with a sunshade borne over his head and a score or two of spearmen on the flank. Mingled with the spearmen was a motley crowd of cheroot bearers, spitoon-carriers, betel-box holders and similar functionaries. At last, bringing up the rear came the actual fighting men. It was just possible to make out that they were marching in a column. They were extremely gorgeous chaps. All had red tunics with facings of yellow, green, blue, etc., but their trousers were very various. Some would be blue with a broad yellow stripe down the side—or, occasionally, for variety, down the front or back. Others blue and green, yellow and brown and so on *ad nauseam*. All had helmets with spikes but, as it is difficult to wear a helmet on the top of a "bun" of long hair, the helmets were as often as not carried on the end of their muskets. You will say—and you would be right—that such a rabble would not stand for a moment against a trained army. Nor was the Second Burmese War, which resulted in the annexation of Upper Burma, a very bloody affair. But there is, as I have mentioned, another side to the picture. In the first Burmese War, not so many years previously, the Burmese Army occasioned considerable loss to our forces and, indeed, under their leader, Bandula, isolated and immobilized the British Force around the Shwe Dagon Pagoda in Rangoon for no less than 10 months, during which time conditions became so bad for our troops that no less than 45 per cent. died of disease, the total British losses in the first Burmese War being 72 per cent. of all troops engaged.

To illustrate what the Burmese Army could do under a really capable leader, let me again quote a contemporary account of the investment of the British troops around the Shwe Dagon Pagoda at Rangoon. I quote from the actual account of Major Snodgrass, Military Secretary to the Expedition: "On the 1st of December," he says (this was in 1824), "we found ourselves completely

surrounded. . . . The line of circumvallation obviously extended a very considerable distance . . . . and as far as celerity, order and regularity are concerned, the style in which the different corps took up their stations in the line reflected much credit on the Burmese Commander. When this singular and presumptuous formation was completed, the soldiers of the left columns laying aside their spears and muskets, commenced operations with their entrenching tools with such activity and goodwill, that in the course of a couple of hours their line had wholly disappeared, and could only be traced by a parapet of new earth, gradually increasing in height. The moving masses had sunk into the ground; and by one who had not witnessed the whole scene, the existence of these subterranean legions would not have been credited—and to us who watched it seemed the work of magic and enchantment.” And that is how the work of a Burmese Army impressed, not an imaginative writer, but a hard-headed soldier. Writing later, Major Snodgrass says: “The trenches were found to be a succession of holes capable of containing two men each, and excavated so as to afford shelter both from the weather and from fire: even a shell lighting in the trench could at most kill but two men. As it is not the Burmese system to relieve their troops in these approaches, each hole contained supplies of rice, water, and even fuel for its two inmates: and under the excavated bank a bed of straw or brushwood was prepared, in order that one man could sleep while his comrade watched. When one line of trench is completed, its occupiers, taking advantage of the night, push forward to where the second is to be opened, their place being immediately taken by fresh troops from the rear.”

All this savours much more of 1914-18 than of 1825. The Burmese attacks continued fiercely for a week, and use was made of fire rafts two hundred feet long containing earthenware jars of petroleum and earth-oil which were floated down among the men-o’war at anchor in the river. One cruiser was severely damaged by this means. At length, however, fierce British counter-attacks were successful in breaking the Burmese line and Bandula withdrew to Donabyn on the Delta, where he had previously provided a fortified position and reinforcements. When the population of Rangoon began to filter back, he managed to introduce his own agents, who succeeded, on December 12th, in burning down half the town, the magazine only being saved by luck. (Note the 5th-column touch here.) The British forces were in no state to march against Donabyn for a further two months and they

then set out painfully, covering only about five miles a day. The bombardment of Donabyn began on April 1st and, unfortunately for the Burmese, Bandula was killed by a stray shot. His army could be induced to serve under no other General, and in the night they melted away—a complete illustration of the value of leadership in an Oriental Army.

I hope I have shown by these illustrations and quotations that the Burman could fight fiercely under a leader he knew and trusted. The same holds good to-day. A Company of Burma Sappers and Miners did well on the Tigris during the Great War and four battalions of the 70th Burma Rifles served in Egypt, Mesopotamia and India.

When I left Burma in 1939 the Burma Rifles were in an extremely efficient state, being composed chiefly of the various indigenous tribes *plus* the low-country Burmans themselves. The low-country Burman excels in anything mechanical and makes an excellent bomber, machine-gunner or signaller. Burmese battalions will, I am sure, give a good account of themselves if called upon in the present war.

I hope I have succeeded in giving you some idea of the Burman: irresponsible, yes, but a very lovable type; cheery and of a remarkably set purpose when he is at a congenial task: not easily driven, but easily led. I have heard the Burman described as the Irishman of the East, and there would seem to be a good deal of truth in the description. He is at any rate fiercely proud of being a Burman. So we can perhaps appreciate his feelings when we hear him say with immense conviction, "Ba-ma pye' lak'pye' ma htu bu"—"There is no other country like Burma."

## O'REGAN AT WAR

*[Being letters from Captain Michael O'Regan of the  
1st Bolton Irish (Territorials) to his brother Pat]*

MY DEAR PADDY,

I'm sorry for the delay in sending you my news. But all my letters were returned by the censor because I wrote about the war. It was difficult to write about anything else, as I've been so busy knocking old Jerry.

However, I've been told that I can write anything I like now and, as everyone else seems to have written his experiences and most of them have been broadcast, I'm going to tell you what happened to me.

A few days after we'd completed our training, we suddenly got orders to pack and embark. This we did and, at once, I found a bit of our training had been omitted. You know what a bad sailor I am. Well, I hadn't been taught how to retain my dinner when the ship was heaving up and down! "Tiger" sent for me and I sent him a message back that I was "otherwise engaged." But he insisted on seeing me and so I staggered up to him and . . . nearly ruined his best coat! "Mr. O'Regan," says he, "I was just going to tell you that I had decided to give you command of a company. But you are obviously unfit to command anything." Which seemed a bit hard, Paddy, because, after all, I had joined the Army and not the Navy.

Well, we all thought we were bound for France. But, when we sailed on and on, we realised that there was something queer happening. Eventually didn't we discover that we had got to Norway. We landed "midst the cheering mobs," so, the paper said. But actually I saw nothing of them, as we landed in the dark.

Then we marched and marched and dug and dug. We were told to expect Jerry any day and so we waited for him. I'm glad he arrived on the fourth day, as Micky had lifted every penny I had by then, playing Poker.

Our position was on hills above a nice little village, in which I established my Headquarters, as I had discovered a homely family, with a very pretty daughter.



"After work, a little pleasure does us all good," was what old Tiger had taught us. So, the minute I had my company nicely dug in, I went to have a chat with my hosts.

"Parlez vous Francais," says I.

"Mais oui," says they, all in chorus.

"That's just too bad," says I, "as I can't speak a word."

Then I tried German.

"Sprechen ze Dautch?"

"Ya . . . Ya," they replied.

So of course I was stymied again.

Then it struck me they might speak English.

"I suppose you don't speak English," I suggested.

And the lovely little girl replied: "I do, but my parents do not."

"That's perfect," says I. "Shure me darlin', we can say what we like and they won't understand."

Oh, Paddy, she gave me such a wicked look. I knew I was going to like Norway.

However, I must tell you about the war.

On the fourth day, up comes Murphy, dragging a half corpse with him. Says he: "Excuse me, Master Frank, Sir. But can you tell me if this is a German?" "I caught the varmint near the rum store and, as he showed considerable resistance, I had to knock him out."

Murphy is so impetuous! I soon discovered, from my Guide Book, that he was an innocent Norwegian and I had to give him half my flask, to bring him round.

When he had recovered, he explained that he had been coming to warn us that the Germans were moving across the hill on our left. Now, this was serious, as that hill was higher than the one we were on. So I moved a platoon up there as quickly as I could and, of course, went with it myself, in case I missed any of the fun.

We had hardly arrived, when we saw the enemy approaching not two hundred yards away. They were just like flies crawling on the window pane. "Hold your fire," I whispered to Murphy, as I wanted to wait until we simply couldn't miss.

When they were about fifty yards away, I shouted "fire" and we let loose at them. They were taken completely by surprise and we got quite a good bag. They ran like blazes and I went back to Company Headquarters, as soon as it was dark.

On the way down, didn't I slip and sit down so hard that I tore a great hole in my pants.

When I got to the inn, I found supper waiting for me. However, I put business before pleasure and asked the little darling to do a little sewing for me. The awkward part was to know how to take my trousers off and give them to her, as the only room, other than bedrooms, was the dining-sitting room. However, these foreign girls don't seem to mind. "Don't be so foolish," says she. "Give me your trousers and get on with your meals."

As she hadn't finished mending them by the time I went to bed, I asked her to give them to me in the morning.

At about 5 A.M. I woke up to hear shooting all round. I leapt out of bed and . . . of course . . . no trousers. I shouted and shouted but got no answer. In rushed Murphy yelling "Come at once, the . . . Bosche is in the village!" There was nothing for it but to bolt as I was and we were soon so busy shooting that I forgot all about not having any trousers on. That went on all day. We fought a Rear Guard action and my company was Rear Party. We gave Jerry something to remember and it was only after he had stopped following us and I suddenly felt mighty cold about the middle that I had time to think about me trousers—or rather the lack of them!

By then, of course, I had no idea where the little girl or my trousers had got to. Neither of them was in the house, as Murphy and I had found every room empty before we left.

I saw some of the men looking at me and I felt so ashamed that I handed over command to Tim and retired to the rear.

I was passing Battalion Headquarters and hoping to find the Adjutant, to borrow his spare pair of trousers, when I saw "Tiger" White standing roaring laughing at me. "Since when have ye joined the Highlanders, Mr. O'Regan?" says he. "Come in here, there is someone anxious to meet you."

He then ushered me in to his room and there I found the little girl holding up my trousers and laughing. You can imagine my embarrassment. I seized them from her and went outside to put them on. Old Tiger followed me out and, with a broad wink said, "I admire your taste, Mr. O'Regan. Go in there and thank her. But don't take more than half an hour doing so, as I expect your company wants you."

Well, Paddy, that was the end of our first battle. The second engagement was a triumph for Murphy. Between casualties

and sickness I was forced to promote him and then didn't his Platoon Commander go sick? So he marched out at the head of a platoon and he knows no Tactics at all. When I asked him about the Principles of the Attack, he replied "I don't rightly know, Master Frank, Sir. But me orders to the men are . . . 'Obey me orders and follow me wherever I go or be heaven I'll cut the tripes out of ye!'" Now that's not the way a commander ought to talk to his men and I explained to him that he must realise his position as a Platoon Commander.

The next week one of my platoons was taken to be taught how to ski. Murphy went in command and I did not see him for a fortnight. When he came back he was just able to stand up on his skis and not much more! The first time he saluted me he fell down heavily and I could not help laughing. "Oh ye may well laugh," says he, "but these were not included in the normal equipment of a soldier when ye made me join up." Poor Murphy! I think his feelings had been quite hurt the way he went away rubbing his backside!

My company was holding two hills that formed a sharp angle and I had one platoon on one hill and another on the other. My third platoon, Murphy's, was in reserve, being nominally more mobile than the others.

Jerry attacked on the third day at dawn and it was just a matter of numbers. We shot and shot, but more and more came on. They had guns and we had none. So by 3 p.m. things were not looking too good. Then I decided it was time to hit the enemy hard. My plan was to suddenly counterattack with Murphy's platoon the next time Jerry's attack was well under way.

The slope was fairly gentle on the right and I thought most of the men would remain standing up coming down it. The slope on the left was awfully steep and ended with a cliff about fifteen feet high.

I sent for Murphy and he could not be found. He and his platoon had gone off to practise ski-ing in the early morning and had not returned. That was a sad blow. Just before Jerry attacked again I got orders to withdraw and I just didn't know what to do about Murphy. I waited until the last possible moment and by then Jerry was on the move. The company on my right had already gone and I knew that it was going to be difficult to get back at all, with Jerry following us up closely. I managed to withdraw the left platoon but the enemy then concentrated everything on wretched Tim's platoon. It was fair

hell and Tim himself had already been wounded and was carrying on with difficulty. Jerry advanced shouting "Hochs" and "Heils" and thought he had a soft thing. It was then that there was an extraordinary noise in the trees on the hill on the left. I couldn't see anything for a few seconds.

But then, in a cloud of snow, down came Murphy's platoon, travelling at about a hundred miles per hour. My heart stood still, as I knew the slope was so steep and I remembered that cliff at the bottom.

But the Germans were far more surprised than I was and they halted. From the cloud of snow there might have been thousands of men coming down. Thank heaven the hill was a small one and most of the men arrived down either on their skis or on their bottoms.

The enemy didn't wait. They beat a hasty retreat and I sent Owen's platoon back to help Murphy to collect his platoon and get it back. I went with them and there I found Murphy sitting on the top of a fat Boshe, with both his skis broken and the point of one half way through another Jerry. He was rubbing his eyes and seemed a bit dazed, so I brought him to himself by speaking roughly, "Sergeant Murphy," I said, in a stern voice, "collect your platoon at once and take it back to that hill." "Right, yer honour," says he, "but anyone can have these flaming slides. Ye can shoot me if ye like, but I'll never put them on again, not for anyone." With that, he undid his skis and pushed off to get his men back.

Later in the evening I heard the rest of the story. Apparently they were practising hard, when they heard firing. So they came towards the noise and reached the top of the hill, just in time to see Tim's predicament. They had already decided they could not possibly get down such a steep slope as they were on, safely. But Murphy saw there was no time to get back and round to the other side. So he extended the platoon, put himself at the head and said, "follow me." So that he would be there, to lead his platoon, Murphy had a man on both sides of him holding him up and that was how he got as far as the cliff. At the cliff they let go and he turned a complete summersault before he landed in the exact position I found him in. His unexpected attack saved a difficult situation and he certainly has plenty of guts, even if he is a poor skier!

I told Tiger what had happened. He sent for Murphy and told him that he was recommending him for a decoration. "That's mighty kind of ye, Sir," replied Murphy. "But ye can roast me before ye ever get me back onto them invintions of the devil."

## FLOATING DOWN THE INDUS: A SUGGESTION FOR TEN DAYS' LEAVE

By P. E. M. ARMESDALE

To most of us in India, ten days' leave constitutes a problem, though it is often the problem of when we will get it rather than where we will go. Even so there must be many officers, both bachelors and married, who feel they would like a real change of scene and a good rest, but cannot think of anywhere to go. To them the Indus trip is offered as an ideal solution, a really lazy ten days spent floating down a big river, free from dust and noise, seeing a part of India that is probably new to them and offering enough occupation in the form of rifle-and-shotgun shooting to add that spice of excitement without which any leave is dull.

There is the choice of three trips: From Attock to Mari Indus, from Mari to Dera Ismail Khan and from D. I. K. to Dera Ghazi Khan. Any of these can easily be done in ten days, and all offer good sport and interesting scenery. The further south you go, the less attractive the country becomes, but the duck, geese and *gharial* are more plentiful and less wary. Let us assume you have chosen to start at Mari Indus.

First, you have to engage a *shikari*. The spot man for that stretch of the river is Anár Khan, who is the Station Staff Officer's gardener at Mari Indus. He has been organising shooting trips for the last fifteen years. If he can be spared you should get in touch with him a few weeks in advance, letting him know the numbers of your party and the date you propose to start. He will need an advance of forty rupees or so, which he uses to hire the boat and her crew and make everything ready on board.

Mari Indus has the advantage of being accessible to any one stationed in Northern India. A train leaves the main line at Rawalpindi every evening about nine o'clock, and gets you to your destination in time for breakfast the next morning. You are met by a small, wiry and very sunburnt man on the platform. Tremendously excited, he produces a letter of identity and is eager to be off. After eggs and bacon in the station refreshment room you spend an hour or so buying flour, vegetables and drink in the Rest Camp bazar. You next call in to see the S. S. O., who wishes you *bon voyage* and loans you a large-scale map of



the river. By half-past-nine you are on board what will be your home for the next week. While the boat is rowed across the river to collect firewood from Kalabagh, you have time to take stock of your surroundings.

The boat in which you are travelling is one normally used to take salt from Kalabagh downstream. It has a room rigged up for you in the centre, whilst Anár Khan and the four boatmen sleep below deck at the stern and your bearer lives and does your cooking in the bows. Small rowing boats, one for each gun, trail astern, ready to take you after duck, geese or *gharial*. The boat leaves Kalabagh and drifts gently downstream, controlled by one enormous oar-shaped rudder. It will not be long before Anár Khan pokes his head round the doorway and says "duck hein," the signal for you to go off in the little boat to try to get near the brutes—you'll have called them worse names than that by the time the trip is over, for they are extremely wary.

Crouched in the bottom of the *dinghy*, you drift near enough to the duck to see them rise and fly off in derision upstream where you cannot follow them. By now it is time for your morning beer, so you wait for the big boat, which comes drifting down with the four-knot current. After lunch you arrive at a village where your big boat ties up and the *shikari* asks a local whether there are any partridges. The answer to this is always "bahut" pronounced "bhoon" so you enlist the services of one or two locals, take your dog and Anár Khan and go off to shoot your next day's food. If the shooting is good, the boat stays there the night. You sleep on board and go after the birds again the next morning. This procedure can be varied by letting the big boat go on whilst you shoot along the bank and then catch up with your home in the evening by means of the *dinghy*.

By travelling from dawn to dusk D. I. K. can be reached in five days, so if you have ten days in hand when you start you will have plenty of time to try your luck wherever you like. There are *jheels* near the river at Mehan Shahwali and Germanwali Kuchchi which give you a chance of fighting the duck. If you wish to send game off by train, or even to abandon the trip owing to rain, the railway from Mari Indus to Darya Khan runs parallel to the left bank of the Indus and there are stations within six miles or so of the river.

It is best to arrange your trip so that you get to Dera Ismail Khan fairly early in the morning. There you say "Goodbye"

to your *shikari* and boatmen and go off to Darya Khan, the nearest railway station, either in tongas or by lorry. The distance is eleven miles and the road consists of a series of bunds and bridges on one of which you have to pay a toll. Thus you reach Darya Khan in time to catch the up train, which gets you back to Rawalpindi early the next morning.

The best months for the trip are December and February. I have actually been in November and more recently in February. I went alone on both occasions, but for shooting purposes a party of two or three would have been better. There are a great many duck on the river during these months, but they are very wild. Geese and *gharial* are also plentiful and I shot as many partridges each day as were required to feed the boat's complement. *Sisi* are plentiful at Kafir Kot, while quail and hare can also be found. The boat itself was extremely comfortable and would have housed two people with ease. A larger party could have taken a tent and slept on shore each night, or hired two boats. The crew were always willing to act, as beaters, and their cheerfulness was only matched by that of Anár Khan, who was excellent in every way. The villagers I met *en route*, though they spoke a weird kind of Punjabi which completely defeated me, were, on the whole, helpful and pleased with their *backsheesh*. The weather during November was perfect, but the February trip was spoilt towards the end by rain.

As regards expense, the whole trip on the first occasion cost me 270 rupees, made up as follows:

	Rs.
Rail and tonga fares from Rawalpindi to Mari Indus, and from Darya Khan back to Rawalpindi	40
Hire of boat	130
Daily expenses (beaters, eggs and milk)	25
Cartridges	30
Stores, drinks, tobacco and firewood	45
Total	270

The railfare item included tickets for me, my bearer, dog and my excess luggage. The hire of the boat included the pay of the boatmen and of the *shikari*. This seemed expensive until I remembered that the boatmen have to pull her back upstream to Mari Indus, which means a further ten days' hard work.

The hundred and thirty rupees, too, was quite inclusive; neither Anár Khan nor the boatmen asked for another anna and were inordinately pleased with their tips at the end of the voyage. Eggs and milk were, curiously enough, not easy to come by and I had to fall back on tinned milk. I used 250 cartridges, over 200 sevens and a few of numbers four and two shot. To sum up, for a party of three the whole trip, exclusive of railfare, could be done very comfortably for 300 rupees.

Apart from the shooting, I saw what was to me quite a new part of India. The old Kafir fort at Kafir Kot is extremely interesting and almost puts Attock Fort in the shade. And what could be a more delightfully restful way of travelling than gliding gently down a big river, away from dust and noise and knowing that one can stop when and where one likes? If I add that this trip is done on the average once a year and that the course of the main river changes every year, you can realise that there is little likelihood of the shooting becoming scarce.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### MESSES AND CLUBS

DEAR SIR,

The article on Messes and Clubs in the October 1940 number of the *Journal of the U. S. I. of India* is open to criticism for a number of reasons.

Before making proposals of any kind, the writer draws a picture of intolerant grousing senior officers who, by implication, regard the young entries as "bumptious young pups," etc. Is this a true picture of anything but a bad regiment or battalion? And if it is untrue or only partially true, the impression conveyed of Mess life to those unacquainted with it is misleading and unfair. There are a great many units whose messes are efficient, economical and comfortable and regarded with justifiable pride and affection by all the officers. It is safe to say a good unit never has a bad Mess any more than it has a bad Quartermaster.

There are also other objections to the article in that it is far from accurate and deals with the administrative side of the proposal made for abolishing messes in a very sketchy fashion, and by mere assertion lays claim to the achievement of a means of living more economical than a mess, without a reasonable examination of the many factors which cannot be lightly disregarded.

Before considering the question further, it is conceded that there are many modifications that can, with advantage, be introduced into mess life, particularly as regards making the mess cater for things hitherto beyond its province—for instance, it can easily provide means of entertaining private guests of members to meals and other entertainments. This is being done in some messes, just as even the most conservative of men's London Clubs have started ladies' rooms.

The writer admits he has made his proposal on the ground of expense, and goes on to say that Mess subscriptions vary according to the number of officers in the unit and their tastes.

All officers pay a "mess subscription" fixed by Regulations at Rs. 8 per month. All other subscriptions or monthly charges under various heads are fixed by the members of the mess themselves, presumably as a means of pooling expenses and of living on a communal basis. It is misleading to describe as unnecessary subscriptions the money paid for such things as furniture, books,

papers and lighting, because they are necessities and might be included in a comprehensive charge for messing. Entertainments and Band subscriptions are different. It must be assumed that enough *esprit de corps* remains to require even a unit, permeated with the democratic spirit, to give occasional entertainments, so some form of entertainment fund with a subscription is desirable in order that the cost may be spread over the year. It is doubtful if the officers of any unit in India pay as much as one per cent. of their pay into an entertainment fund, and it is worth pointing out that in the vast majority of entertainments the host as well as the guest gets some return for his money in concrete (or liquid) form.

Your correspondent deals with station messes, and falls into the mistake of calling the Frontier Force Mess at Kohat one. It is a station mess only in the sense that R.A. messes at certain stations are station messes and is reserved for the officers of one corps. He is apparently unfortunate in not having acquaintance of any well-run and tolerably comfortable station messes. His description of the objections to station messes, if exaggerated, is in reality an argument in favour of unit messes which he is out to abolish.

The proposal put forward is found at the end of the article "to abolish all but field messes and to permit unmarried officers to live in residential clubs or chummeries."

Mess "discipline," to use a wrong term, may be irksome to some, but need it be any more strict than the code of behaviour one expects of officers in their parents' homes; in other words, manners, punctuality and consideration for others, including the servants.

Mess organization is another matter. Government gives a liberal monthly grant towards a mess. Mess buildings are specially designed and provided in all new constructions—a staff is available to help in the running of the mess, in the shape of an N.C.O., etc., and everything designed to enable officers to live a communal existence as economically as possible. That the senior officer present in mess is responsible for the behaviour of those junior to him is no departure from the military code, which applies everywhere, and it can be said without fear of contradiction that of the cases where a senior officer has to intervene only the very smallest fraction arise in messes.

Those who say light-heartedly, "scrap the mess," cannot have considered what a great deal the mess does for them. A field



mess, as advocated, is presumably an affair that only comes into being on active service, on the frontier and during training. There can be no question of a Mess house or office, though presumably camp furniture would be stored somewhere.

Does the author realize how expensive it is suddenly to establish a mess and then to close it? Overhead charges and waste are alarming and the poorest of messing in discomfort costs at least double if not treble of what a regular mess can feed officers on, even on manœuvres.

It might be argued that the cooks and staffs from chummeries would be co-opted. A possible solution but not a happy team. As for chummeries within a regiment or battalion, they would either be highly inefficient or very expensive, probably both, because officers have not the time to run them, and young and inexperienced officers lack the knowledge of how to do so. Government quarters are not designed to permit of chummeries springing up so there is the expense of housing them to be shared by various cliques. How are young officers, freshly joined, to be catered for until the various Soviets decide where they are to live, and what happens when the members of a chummery are sent away or reduced to one person? To quote the example of officers of the I.C.S. or police is entirely misleading. They are looked after on first arrival by their seniors, and because they have to go out into districts and work alone, must learn to cater for themselves. They live a different life and can arrange their hours of work more or less to fit in with their domestic habits.

The assumption that Clubs will sink money in order to provide residential quarters for officers is far from the mark. The average Club charges Rs. 90 a month for a single furnished quarter; the junior officer who would occupy it draws in cash from Government Rs. 25 to Rs. 50 lodging allowance, provided no Government quarters are vacant—and during the hot weather there are generally plenty vacant. A Club cannot provide a quarter for much under Rs. 3 per day, unless it can be assured that every room will be full all the year round.

Another point that has been completely overlooked is that with the free admission of Indians into the officer cadre of the Indian Army, there is the absolute necessity for a common meeting ground in the mess. With the Chummery system you would foster racial and caste cleavages that would make mess life in a field mess (which the writer admits is necessary) an impossibility.

The writer may, perhaps, have no experience of the War, 1914-1918, in which the normal mess system was regimental or battalion headquarters and Squadron or Company messes. It was a well recognised fact that, whenever units were far enough from the Line to do so, the first essential as regards officers messes was to get back to the system of all officers messing together again. Not long ago a very fine soldier who earned a decoration as an officer in 1918, and who, on demobilization re-enlisted, and is now a Regimental Sergeant-Major, made the following remark: "You can tell the tone of a Battalion from the Officers' Mess and the Sergeants' Mess." (He might have added the Quarterguard.) Would any one be so bold as to say you can tell the tone of a battalion from a number of chummeries substituted for a mess?

G. P. B.

## REVIEWS

## "MEMORY HOLD-THE-DOOR"

BY JOHN BUCHAN

*Hodder & Stoughton—12/6 nett.*

John Buchan's last book is writing that grows upon one. The first chapters fail—not because of their matter which is singularly gracious *but* because one is conscious of a style which has begun to parody itself. It was perhaps Buchan's misfortune that his usage of words smelt of the tweed of the tailor's shop rather than of the Tweed which flows amongst the hills.

This inpression, however, is brief. The change comes when Buchan describes himself as a young barrister, making his way in a metropolitan world unfamiliar to him, and later observing, and living in a world no less strange—South Africa—at the close of a war. From this point his style, like his thought, deepens and broadens, and both present a picture of a life—foreign to modern ways of thinking—to be admired, and since that way of life has passed, to be regretted. It was the life of the man of affairs, and yet related in all its moments to a scholarship easily worn and an experience of life which is never overemphasized.

And so his book draws on—through the war, public life and a brief period of the full, quiet existence of a minor English country house, to a really remarkable analysis of modern America—fruits of the observation of a dual personality: that of John Buchan and Lord Tweedsmuir.

A remarkable autobiography ends with two chapters (entitled "Pilgrims Rest") of a book on fishing, projected but never completed. Here the standard of comparison is with Izaak Walton. One is left with the conclusion that the philosophy of both these masters of the contemplative life is summed up in Walton's concluding words. These are "Study to be quiet."

C. M.

## EDITORIAL

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Dated from the "Victory" off Cadiz, on a certain 9th October, there came a memorandum which has great value for us nearly a hundred and thirty-six years later. The memorandum was written by Lord Nelson whose strategical and tactical ideas and methods left a legacy of the spirit to all fighting men—something that has been called "The Nelson Touch."

Just what was the "Nelson touch?" The answer seems to be found in these three sentences of the Memorandum:

"Thinking it almost impossible to bring a fleet of forty sail of the line into battle in variable winds, thick weather and other circumstances which must occur . . . . I have therefore made up my mind. . . ."

\* \* \* \*

"Something must be left to chance."

\* \* \* \*

"But in case signals can neither be seen nor perfectly understood no captain can do very wrong if he places his ship alongside that of an enemy."

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The thought in these sentences is as clear as the voice is unmistakable. First hard thought, imagination and foresight work out an answer to difficulties which seem to be insuperable. Nelson having done this, takes one of the hardest and least common of decisions—the acceptance of calculated risk—and dismisses it in six words: "Something must be left to chance." And, finally, to clinch the matter and as a superb solvent for the fog of war in a situation which admits of no delay, enounces the last golden rule—engage the enemy.

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It was evident early in this year that the spring and summer would bring about a tremendous increase in the war's intensity. Only the few however who, in war, can be singularly well informed, or those with extraordinary gifts of imagination and foresight, could have imagined the enormous increase in the geographical area involved, or the speed at which this increase has taken place. Speed and extension are the two characteristics of modern war which are hardest

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to grasp; the mind accepts them as an impression but is slow to work out the hard train of new thoughts which follow.

The history of the last four months is simple enough to follow in outline, for it centres on the German thrust to the South-East. History will decide whether the attack upon the Balkans and upon Greece was strategically an offensive or a counter-offensive. Our concern is that it happened, and that it was a success. Then followed the hard-fought battle of Crete—notable as the first major action of parachute and airborne troops in the history of war. During the same months occurred the German offensives in Cirenaica.

That, in a paragraph, is an objective account of Germany's Spring offensive. The details are known to all and we do not propose to recount them here. It is interesting now to reflect upon the achievements of the British Empire's forces and to attempt to compare them with those of the German machine.

*First*, Britain is still uninvaded. In this fact perhaps lies the core of the whole problem. It means that Hitler has not yet felt able to embark upon such a direct means of achieving his end. *Secondly*, the Battle of the Atlantic—perhaps the most vital that in this war has been waged—has turned in the Empire's favour. Sea power has kept open the Empire's vital communications, and sea power's invisible and iron hands are closing round German throats. Never has Mahan's famous sentence concerning those distant and storm-beaten ships—upon which the Grand Army never looked, but which stood between Napoleon and the dominion of the world—had such a powerful application to contemporary events. *Thirdly*, there is the growing weight of the Royal Air Force's assault upon whatever military targets Germany and a German-ridden Europe may offer to superb audacity, determination and skill. It is notable that each day's broadcast news brings increasing mention of daylight attacks upon the enemy wherever he is to be found within our aircraft's range. This is perhaps one of the most heartening signs of the times—a determined offensive ruthlessly pressed home.

If we look further Eastward we see much that may fill us with pride and confidence. Mussolini's five-year-old Empire has ceased to exist (Cheren may yet be classed among the world's decisive battles), and the Italian navy seldom seeks the waters of what once was called (by Italians) an Italian sea. The German-inspired coup in Iraq has failed and the Germano-Vichy forces in Syria, after hard fighting, have asked for and been granted an armistice.



Germany, meanwhile, has embarked upon a Russian adventure of which the results remain to be seen. It is as yet premature and dangerous to draw any parallel between 1941 and 1812.

The mention of the year 1812 draws our thoughts, by association, towards America. In that year Britain and the United States were at enmity; one hundred and nineteen years later it seems that these two Democracies have found an understanding closer than ever before. America has realised her dangers and has, in effect, entered this war upon our side. The Lease and Lend Act has become a reality of daily life; and the inhabitants of Iceland in years to come may find a profitable mine of reminiscence in the arrival of American troops. More significant perhaps than any other pronouncement is a sentence in a recent speech by the Prime Minister. It runs: "Every month as great bombers are finished in our factories or sweep thither across the Atlantic Ocean, we shall continue a remorseless discharge of high explosives on Germany." The meaning is plain. In 1941 as surely as in the 18th Century the New World is assisting to preserve the balance of the saner elements of the Old.

Historical parallels are dangerous things unless rightly drawn. Nevertheless it is interesting to compare the state of the war to-day with that phase of the Napoleonic Wars which preceded the landing of the British Army in Portugal. The European situation was then very much like that which exists to-day. The predominant land power and the predominant sea power of the world were at grips. The great part of England's army was held in Britain as a defence against invasion, while the French armies dominated all Europe. The British Fleet was master of the seas, but it is scarcely ever realised how strained our naval resources were in maintaining that mastery, and with that difficulty, matched with what strategical insight, Barham at the Admiralty and St. Vincent, Nelson and others at sea applied comparatively meagre forces to their enormous problem.

Behind the fighting fronts economic warfare in terms of British blockade and French Continental System was fiercely waged. Tension was acute and the balance between defeat and victory was most delicately held for both the combatant powers. This state of affairs continued for years and not perhaps until 1812 could certainty, as distinct from confidence, of ultimate victory enter the mind of any contemporary Englishman.

Thus inevitably there appear the similarities between the Napoleonic and Hitlerian bids for world domination. The first

is in the object itself. The dominion of the world is a madman's dream which has only two ends—awakening in exile or dissolution in death.

The second similarity is in the means. Both Napoleonic France and modern Germany enjoyed at their chosen moment an enormous material superiority and the land space in which to employ it. In each case the results of these advantages were quickly apparent. It has been said, however, that Napoleon's power, like that of the Devil in Medieval legends, stopped short at the water's edge. The same is true of Hitler's power. It lacks the long-term element and the endurance which sea power alone can give. It is true that air power to some extent now overrides protecting seas but as yet it cannot bridge them. Modern warfare demands for success the constant and closest co-operation of three powers—land, sea and air. The vital link is sea power and this Germany does not possess.

Finally, there is the matter of morale. Napoleonic France was united by the Revolutionary tradition and its armies found a close bond and an individual stimulus in fanatical devotion to one man. But it was the union of slavery and the devotion of slaves. Neither survived the blood-tax demanded year by year nor the cold and hunger which increased as food and fuel diminished. The same weaknesses are apparent in the German façade and the same slow weapons attack them. The result of the attack cannot be different.

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The perplexing puzzle of the relations between Germany  
and Russia has at last been solved by the  
Russia outbreak of war between these two countries.

Up till April of this year a Russo-German war seemed, at least, to be unlikely; and both countries appeared to stand to each other in the relations of a pair of sharp and unscrupulous business associates. Germany apparently acquiesced in Russia's possession of half Poland and of the Baltic States and in her dominant position in the Balkans and the Dobruja, in return for the provision of oil and certain other supplies.

The setback to the German time-plan occasioned by the resistance of Yugoslavia and Greece and by the bitter struggle for Crete must have made it necessary for Germany to seek with Russia some more definite and intimate understanding than that sketched above. What proposals were made, what refusals were encountered, we shall not know for some time. It has, however,

been said of the German that he is apt to begin a conversation by stamping on the listener's foot in order to attract attention and thereafter grows angry if the conversation continues on lines other than those which he had foreseen. There are signs of the technique having been applied by Germany in her wooing of the U.S.S.R.

Words presumably having failed, the process of intimidation (or the "war of nerves") began. Rumours were put abroad in Sweden of impending invasion. Separatist intrigues were pursued in the Ukraine and German spectacles flashed covetously as they glanced towards Baku. Russia's position was difficult in the extreme since it may be supposed that she had learned the lesson that with Germany one cannot be an ally but only a lackey, tattered or gilded as circumstances dictate. On the other hand, a natural self-interest may have made Russia unready to accept the alternative course of war. The Russo-Japanese Pact of April may have been designed to leave Russia a free hand in the West—despite the curious assertions of the Russian Press that the Pact meant nothing at all—and in May there were strong rumours that many of Russia's Far-Eastern troops had been massed against the German frontiers. From that time onward one may guess at the increasing military pressure applied by Germany until, suddenly, invasion came.

There have been several explanations of the German motives and none of them have been entirely satisfactory. It seems almost certain, however, that their attack was not born of motives which were short-term or purely economic. Germany has perhaps realised that she faces a war which will end only with her destruction. Her failures in Cirenaica, in Iraq and in Syria and her terribly expensive successes in Greece and Crete may have convinced her that it is not, after all, in her power to win quickly. The only solution of her problem lies in the destruction of Britain and nothing less than the possession of all Europe affords her any hope of so doing.

It is not profitable at the moment to attempt any comment upon the new campaign. The quality of the German forces is known and that of the Russians can, at this distance, be but surmised. It seems, however, that the Russian forces are fighting stoutly and under able direction. One thought is interesting—mechanised armies have always clamoured for space in which to develop their powers but with extension of space there has always been assumed a corresponding extension of supply. This

assumption may not be true when dealing with Russia's bewildering extent and there the space which fighting vehicles devour may also be their grave.

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It is unfortunate that certain of the leaders of Vichy France have adopted an attitude of bitter hostility to the Allies. But it is by no means certain that this attitude is fully representative of French opinion either as regards the people themselves or those who now control their interests. M. Laval in a broadcast at the end of May said: "We owe our failure to Democracy. We do not want to fight for it. France cannot go back. She must fulfil two tasks with the great powers of Europe, get peace first and then overcome unemployment, poverty and its disorders to constant socialism." Some days later it was reported in the Press that France had considered a reversal of her policy of alliances.

It is possible for a nation to be defeated in the field and yet to retain its spirit and its ideals. Germany is a case in point for, after defeat in 1918, she preserved these things though the German spirit is bestial and German ideals are obscene. The rulers of Vichy France in adversity have shown no quality which commands the admiration or respect of sane and free men. They have boasted and grovelled, whined and ranted, and now seem to be passing to open betrayal of their late Allies.

The time seems to have come when we must harden our hearts and cease to regard the present rulers of France with only such emotions as pity and contempt. We must look at them with the eyes of enemies and expect from them nothing but hostility. But it is unreasonable to suppose that the democratic spirit of Republican France can be obliterated in a few months or years and we should prepare for a reversal of her present policy and a return to friendship with the democracies.

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It is probable that the future historian who takes up his work at the point at which Colonel Lloyd, in his *Review of the History of Infantry*, left off, will describe the present period as one during which infantry entered upon a Renaissance. The Great War of 1914—18 was fought in the main by foot soldiers but it produced nothing that could be called an infantry method or tradition. Thought and imagination alike failed to surmount the mental barriers whose counterparts in the field were interminable trench-systems, innumerable machine-guns and miles of barbed wire. It is true

that the Germans in 1918 produced the idea of infiltration, probably the most germinative idea in infantry tactics that had appeared since the days of Fredrick the Great. Yet this idea did not much colour our training and tactics which were based on a conception of the infantryman burdened like the White Knight and capable only of determined plodding in the wake of an artillery barrage or of a tank.

During the post-war period interest and thought centred largely upon the other arms; and the problem of how the infantry could get forward to their objectives was discussed in terms of anything save the infantryman himself. A bewildering amount of armament was bestowed (largely in theory) upon battalions and later removed from them. There was at one time much talk of Sir John Moore and of the Light Division, and at another of the Tartars and Mongols who for a time were fashionable military models. The infantry as a body tended to busy itself with the drill books and with target practice, and would on the whole have welcomed back again its red coats. Probably only on the various frontiers of the Empire were the realities of infantry training and fighting kept at all alive.

It is the peculiarity of the present war that thought as regards infantry seems to be ahead of the times. British infantry have fought in France, Norway, Libya, Abyssinia, Greece and Crete. The warfare and its lessons have varied in each case, yet there has been no attempt rigidly to cut the infantryman to whatever particular patterns have been evolved by facts. The central conception is one which looks forward and sees infantry, as an arm, both mobile and protected, flexible and capable of application together with other arms. That this is a true conception has been proved by ourselves in Libya and by Germans in France. That it is a new conception is proved by a moment's reflection on the past.

With this new approach to infantry as an arm has come a new approach to the infantryman as an individual. The emphasis on training is now laid upon individual instead of mass characteristics. It appears to be our first aim to produce the hunter and killer of men and machines, and after that groups of hunters working under the direction of a single will. A new technique and discipline are appearing and yet both seem to be rooted in a principle enunciated three centuries ago. We must now demand that our infantry are, and try to train them to be, men who "make some conscience of what they do."



Few who have boxed have not at some time entered the ring with a professional. The experience is often distressing but invariably illuminating. It is a study in the technique of battle, immediately applied. The characteristics of the professional which strike the amateur are these: cunning, adaptability, aggression, foresight and speed. To link the first characteristic with the fourth is the initial stage in the game. The professional studies his opponent and plans his battle in those curiously cold seconds which follow the order to box. The second stage is the mixture of aggression and adaptability—from the secure base of foresight and cunning the professional develops a terrifying ability to punch from any angle and with a strange fore-knowledge of the measures likely to be adopted by the defence. And, finally, there is speed—a quality quite unlike haste—which gives to the assailed the impression of being attacked by seven separate men in three minutes. Military training can learn much from the methods of the ring.

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By the courtesy of the Royal Artillery Institution there have been presented to the Library the three admirable volumes of *The History of the Royal Artillery from the Indian Mutiny to the Great War*. The completion of the pre-Great War history of the Royal Artillery was entrusted originally to Major-General Sir Charles Callwell and to Major-General Sir John Headlam. The death of Sir Charles Callwell prevented him from completing more than two parts of Volume I and the remainder of the history has been written by Sir John Headlam.

Volume I deals with the organisation, armament and training of the Royal Artillery between 1860—1899 while Volume II carries on the story to 1914. Volume III describes Campaigns between 1860 and 1914. This treatment of the subject is as effective as it is ingenious and results in a narrative which is a model of lucidity and straightforward historical writing. Gunners who read this book will naturally base their judgment of it upon grounds somewhat differing from those of a layman reader. Whatever the grounds, however, there can be no doubt that Sir John Headlam has written a book worthy in every way of the splendid history of the great Regiment which it records.

## A BRIGADE AT DUNKIRK—AND AFTER

BY BRIGADIER J. G. SMYTH, V.C., M.C.

Several books have recently been published on the operations leading to the re-embarkation of the B.E.F. at Dunkirk. These have mostly been written by journalists who were either with the B.E.F. at the time or who were following the situation from Press and B.B.C. reports. Much has also been written in the Press on the subsequent "Battle of Britain"—the great air battles over England, the bombings and the counter-bombings and the probabilities and possibilities of the invasion of the British Isles.

Lord Gort's despatches on the operations in France and Belgium have not, however, yet been published, and there have been very few accounts of the Dunkirk operations by Commanders or Staff Officers.

As I happened to be the only officer of the Indian Army in command of a Brigade at Dunkirk, I thought a short account of the operations from a Brigade point of view might be of interest to U.S.I. of India readers and to old comrades of the Indian Army who fought with me in the last war over much of the same ground.

After four months as G.S.O.I. of a Division, I assumed command of an Infantry Brigade in England on 5th February, 1940. The Brigade formed part of a first-line Territorial Division with a very distinguished Great War record. The Division was commanded by one of the youngest major-generals in the British Army and was under orders to go out to France to join the B.E.F. within a fortnight from the day I arrived. The Brigade proper consisted of three North country battalions with the usual additions in the Bde. Gp. area of a Regiment of Field Artillery, R. E. Coy., Anti-Tank Bty. and Field Ambulance.

All three battalions were billeted in and around one town with Bde. H.Q. in a large country house about four miles away. The Mess billets were very poor, most of them being in vacated stables, barns and very old houses which gave little comfort against the really bitter weather. England had just been undergoing a very severe spell of snow and frost which, in this particular area, had caused widespread devastation. The countryside looked as if it had been swept by a tornado. The telegraph lines had been unable to bear the extra weight of snow and ice, which

had caked upon them and were broken and strewn all over the roads and the roadside, with the telegraph poles snapped off. There was not a telegraph post intact for miles.

The forest near-by had also suffered severely, and was a mass of broken branches and broken trees. The main road between Bde. H.Q. and the battalions was cracked and broken up by the severe frost and was full of dangerous clefts and cavities which made motoring in daylight difficult, and in the black-out dangerous, and anything but pleasant.

My predecessor had departed prior to my arrival and the Bde. Major was due to go within a few days.

The hot-water supply had broken down, there was a coal shortage due to the extreme weather conditions, and what with one thing and another the general depression was somewhat acute.

The Bde. Intelligence Officer with the Bde. advance parties was already in France. As is the case with most Indian Army Officers, I had had little experience of the Territorial soldier before the present war. I very soon found that the men were splendid material, tough, hardy, North country men, many of them miners and agricultural labourers. A Bde. boxing tournament held after my arrival was an eye-opener to me. I have always been particularly keen on Army and professional boxing, both at Home and in India, but never, in any boxing competition had I ever seen more whole-hearted fighting, with no quarter given or asked combined with more than an average amount of skill. They were also very keen on rugger and cricket, and had some very good performers at both games.

The officers were young and keen, but of course very untrained and inexperienced.

Since embodiment just before the war started, training had been carried on under the greatest difficulties. It was one thing to double the Territorial Army on paper, but quite another to produce the equivalent number of trained units within a reasonable time.

The B.E.F. had been despatched to France with all speed at the beginning of the war, taking with them most of the trained personnel in the country. The Territorial Divisions had to fit themselves for war with a very small proportion of regular officers and N.C.O.s to guide them. Add to this the shortage of arms and equipment, and particularly of ammunition for practice purposes, heavy anti-sabotage guard duties, frequent moves, shortage of adequate training areas and the particularly severe winter,

and you may get some idea of the difficulties which faced those first Territorial Divisions which had to fit themselves for active service in the early Spring of 1940.

The question of vehicle driving and maintenance alone was an enormous problem. Battalions, with a minimum of trained drivers, had not only to take over a large number of mechanical vehicles, but to maintain them and keep them on the road in winter weather with very small facilities as regards garages, workshops and tools. All this was of course the price we had to pay for unpreparedness in the years before the war. I return to India with a profound admiration for the Territorials and the way they got down to their problems, but with an equally profound hope that the system will never be reintroduced into Great Britain and that some form of conscription will remain in force after the war.

It is in many ways much more difficult to teach a half-trained man than one who has nothing to unlearn. Drill, for instance, on which much importance was stressed, was a constant bugbear to the Territorial soldier who had a rough and ready method of sloping and presenting arms, which did not commend itself to inspecting officers. It took far longer to get their drill correct than it would have done if we had had time and opportunity to give a few weeks to it and start afresh from the beginning—or, of course, if we had had a simplified form of drill.

Time, however, was just what we hadn't got. I reckoned we wanted a minimum of six weeks' intensive training, chiefly section, platoon and weapon training before the Brigade could be brought to a satisfactory standard—and we were due to leave England in 10 days. True, if given the opportunity, we could continue our training over the other side—and that eventually was the intention. The keenness and fighting spirit of all ranks, their cheerfulness under all conditions and anxiety to improve, more than made up, however, for the gaps in their training which had to be filled as opportunity offered. Before I left the Bde., both Territorial battalions beat a regular Bn. in a drill competition in which the drill was of a particularly high standard.

Although the country in the immediate vicinity of the Bde. area was eminently suitable for the training of all arms, there were many obstacles to the movement of troops. There were areas containing livestock of all sorts, which suffered from being disturbed and, worst of all, from a training point of view, there were large stretches of racing gallops which were not allowed to be crossed. These were of course the early days of the war, when

the training of race horses was still given priority over the training of troops. Suitable ground for digging was particularly hard to get. There was one bleak area known as "Snap" where all Bdes. of the Division dug in turn. Movement to this area was up a narrow track which soon became a foot deep in very clinging mud. "Snap" was a place of ill omen to the Bde. as it always snowed when we had to go there and we did our practice of trench reliefs and trench duties in one of the worst blizzards I have ever experienced. Nevertheless, "Snap" gave us some very realistic practice in digging and wiring under conditions which might have faced us if this war had been fought on the same lines as the last.

There was so much to be done that it was difficult to know where to start and what to concentrate on.

We first had to get our house in order at Bde. H.Q. The Divisional Commander produced an excellent Bde. Major for me and the commander of my old Division gave me a head clerk. Efficiency followed automatically. The training of clerks both at Divisional and Bde. H.Q. was a big problem. There was no Army reserve of trained clerks, and now that the bulk of the typing in civil life is done by women, it was difficult to find male clerks of any experience from the new entry.

In the Division of which I had been G.S.O.I. we had had some excellent A.T.S. women typists and shorthand clerks. They were, however, suddenly removed and we were left in a worse position than if we had never had them.

Fortunately, I knew one of the partners in a well-known London firm of business organizers. He volunteered to give six weeks of his time and that of one of his assistants to the organization and training of the Divisional Clerks. His labours soon bore wonderful fruit and I got him in again to do the same thing for my Bde. and passed him on to my new Divisional H.Q.

The improvement in the Bde. Office was remarkable, and our chief difficulty afterwards was in preventing our clerks from being pinched by higher formations. Three of them got commissions during the year I was with the Bde.

To cope with the present-day flood of paper, a good office staff, with at least one first-class stenographer, is essential if the Bde. Staff are not to be tied to their office stools for too many hours each day.



Another solution would be to cut down the paper, the floods of forms in triplicate, the certificates, the signatures and counter-signatures, etc. Perhaps this will come in time—but that time was certainly not yet.

The Bde. A. Tk. Coy. had been formed by each Bn. supplying one Pln. We were not to get our 25 mm. A. Tk. guns until we got to France. Bns. had evidently regarded the A. Tk. Coy. as a Heaven-sent opportunity for off-loading all their bad hats! This was obviously poor policy in a war in which tanks were almost certain to be our chief enemy. The personnel of the Coy. had to be weeded drastically and replaced with picked men.

As regards training in the Bns., we concentrated on weapon training whenever we could get the ammunition and took particular trouble over the training of fighting patrols and pln. leadership generally. The Bosche had already proved himself a master in the art of his conduct of fighting patrols by night. Lack of efficiency in this particular is apt to result in loss of confidence and lowering morale. In theory, of course, every pln. should be able to find a first-class night-fighting patrol. This, however, demands a high standard of training and a great deal of practice. We concentrated, for a start on training two really good fighting patrols in each battalion. These consisted of picked men. They specialised in night patrolling and also gave demonstrations to Coys. This paid us well later on as, the first night we were in contact with the Bosche, units sent out their picked patrols into No Man's Land as soon as it was dark, with the greatest confidence, and they gave a very good account of themselves.

The Divisional Commander held several Bde. exercises to practise us in the very important problem of M.T. movement, and we marched hard and far to get the men's feet thoroughly hard. Meanwhile, however, our move to France had been cancelled.

On February 13th we were told confidentially that we were to form part of a force earmarked to go to Finland, to the assistance of the Finns.

Our advance parties were recalled from France and we started to think in terms of fighting in conditions of snow and ice, for which the existing weather conditions in England were a not unsuitable preparation. We had another severe snowstorm that week-end. The newspapers were now full of the fighting in Finland and the possibilities of a British Expeditionary Force being sent out there. By March and the Finns, after putting up splendid resistance to very superior Russian Forces, were being gradually beaten back. The political negotiations for the despatch of

our force to Finland fell through and the capitulation of the Finnish armed forces was then inevitable. Once more we were ordered to proceed to France and advance parties were again despatched. On arrival at the port of embarkation, the Staff Captain, who was in charge of all the Bde. advance parties, went down with measles and had to be replaced by another officer of the Bde. Staff at an hour's notice. Our "Q" learner on the Bde. Staff took his place. We were thenceforward never without him, and he proved his value time and again.

The Bde. I.O. is always available to act as B.M. but, on the "Q" side, one is much handicapped if there is no officer to take the place of the Staff Captain.

On March 29th, H.M. The King inspected the Bde. On Tuesday, 9th April, came the sudden German invasion of Norway and Denmark.

On April 11th, Comd. Warburton-Lee (who had been one of my pupils at the Camberley Staff College) carried out his gallant and successful attack with his destroyers at Narvik, in which he was killed, but was later awarded the first V.C. of the war.

By Saturday, 13th April, the Divisional Comd. and about half the Division had gone across to France. I was left commanding what remained. That night we received a telephone message from the War Office to tell us to stand fast and be prepared to proceed on a special mission—obviously Norway.

We remained at immediate notice until the 16th, when I was ordered to despatch one Field Regt. and go up to the War Office for orders.

At this time the situation in Norway was somewhat confused and at the War Office conference it was eventually decided that we were to continue our move to France as originally ordered. At this time there were very strong rumours that Italy was on the point of declaring war against us.

On April 23rd, in exceptional heat (such are the vagaries of the English climate) the Brigade Group, less the Field Regt., which never joined us again, left its billeting area for France. With my car at the door loaded up with my kit, my wife and I leant out of our hotel window in the main street and watched the battalions march by on their way to the station. The men, although heavily laden and wearing their greatcoats and full packs, were in great heart. They swung along singing "Roll out the barrel" which somewhat unaccountably changed to "Tipperary" just as they passed our window and reminded me forcibly of similar scenes in the last War.

The move went like clockwork, and in the early hours of the morning we drew in at Cherbourg and started to disembark. The troops spent the day in rest camps and myself with the Base Commandant, who had been a Major-General at the beginning of the war but, like so many others, had been judged too old for an active command in modern war. Now, wearing a Colonel's badges, he was running a most excellent show at this busy port. He complained bitterly at being so far from any possible scene of action—little knowing that, within only a matter of weeks, the Germans would be at his very doorstep and he himself would only escape death or capture by the skin of his teeth.

We entrained that evening for Fresnay, whence we were to proceed to a concentration area to complete our training. All the wheeled and track vehicles had preceded us on separate ships and were due to meet us there. On arrival, however, we found that our orders had been changed and that we were to proceed by rail and M.T. to Roncq and take over a sector of the defences on the Franco-Belgian frontier. I went on ahead by car, stopping *en route* at G.H.Q. and to have tea with the Corps Commander at Bethune.

My route took me through the middle of the area so well known to the Indian Corps in 1914-15 and names such as Richebourg, Neuve Chapelle, Picantin and La Basse on the signposts brought back vivid memories of the last War. I took over an interesting sector of the frontier defences on which the B.E.F. had been working assiduously all through the winter.

The Chief Liaison Officer, the Duke of Gloucester, visited the Brigade on May 1st and went all round the defences, which he knew inside out as he did most of the other portions on the front. The men had quite good billets and were kept busy improving the defences and doing as much training as we could fit in. The weather was extremely hot and airless. On May 3rd, Lord Gort, the C.-in-C., saw all Bde. Commanders at Div. H.Q. Meanwhile, the campaign in Norway was not going well for us. The Germans had gained too great an initial advantage and, by May 4th, we had had to evacuate Southern Norway.

On May 6th one of my three Territorial Battalions was ordered off to another sphere of action and I was given instead a regular battalion of a famous Highland Regt. which had been brigaded with the 15th Sikhs in the Sirhind Bde. in 1915. There was still one officer left in the battalion who had been with them then and whom I remembered.

On May 7th we had an E.N.S.A. concert for the troops and there appeared to be no indication that the German attack on Holland and Belgium was so soon to materialise. We had a full programme of training and inspections and the C.-in-C. was due to inspect the Brigade within a few days. I had a large and comfortable Bde. H.Q., which was reputed to be the best in France. With French interpreters, attached officers and liaison officers, the Bde. Mess seldom consisted of less than 15 officers which meant a big job for the billeting and messing officers. The French people in the vicinity could not have been more friendly and helpful to us in every way.

In the early hours of Friday, May 10th, large formations of German bombers were heard overhead and some heavy crumps were heard in the vicinity. This could only mean one thing. I switched on my wireless and heard that the Germans had invaded Holland and Belgium at 0300 hrs. The frontier barriers were pulled down and, by mid-day, the Bde. was on the march across the frontier. Our first job was to give A.A. protection and to piquet the roads for another formation of the B.E.F. moving through our area. The atmosphere was electric and everyone very much "on their toes." During the next few days, the forward divisions of the B.E.F. moved up in support of the Belgian Army on the river Dyle and on May 14th the Bde. Gp. moved up by M.T. on to the R. Escaut in support, to be followed shortly afterwards by the remainder of the Division.

Thenceforward, throughout the operations, we fought almost always in Bde. Gps., the Brigadier having under his command a Regt. of Field Artillery, a Battery of A. Tk. guns (2-pounds), a Coy. R. E. and a Field Ambulance. The Brigade thus became a fighting formation of all arms. All that was needed to complete it was a battery of A.A. guns, which has now become part of the Bde. establishment. This arrangement is to my mind the only sound one in very mobile operations. The Bde. Gp. occupied anything from 26 to 30 miles of road space and, with such distances and with the congestion on the roads decentralisation *from the start* was essential. Then, if the situation stabilised (which it didn't) the Div. Comd. could withdraw such units as he wanted under his own control to gain the greatest effect possible from the fire power of the supporting arms.

The Bde. A. Tk. Coy. only took over their 25-mm. guns on May 13th and half the Coy. only had an opportunity of firing with them once on an improvised range before we went into action.



They were tremendously pleased with the accuracy and handiness of the guns, but it was, of course, a very severe handicap that only half the men should ever have had an opportunity of firing them—and then only once. The portion of the river line allotted to us was from excl. Tournai to incl. Pecq, a very long line which it would obviously take all of three battalions to hold. The position was complicated by the high feature of Mont St. Aubert, the other side of the river, which completely dominated our whole position and our back areas. We decided to hold it with one complete battalion. On the 15th and 16th we were busy digging in and organizing the position. The R. Escaut was a good tank obstacle and we started making an artificial one with mechanical excavators for the forward battalion. We had our first experience of the refugee problem, about which so much has been written, during these two days, the roads becoming almost impassable with the solid stream of humanity.

On May 16th Tournai was very heavily bombed with the intention of destroying the important road and railway bridge. I watched a succession of bombers swoop low on to their target until the whole area was one cloud of smoke and flame. We then motored into the town to see to what extent the communications had been interrupted. Not a bomb had hit the bridge, although the bombing had been carried out at low level and under the most favourable conditions. Many heavy bombs had, however, fallen in the town and in the absence of any A.R.P. or civil control, the inhabitants, with one accord, took to the roads to swell the ever increasing stream of refugees which was to prove such a handicap to our subsequent operations.

The next morning I received a message that the Corps Comd. wanted to see me at Div. H.Q. immediately. He was considerably delayed by the congestion on the roads and did not arrive until mid-day. He informed us that formidable German mechanized forces had broken through the French on the R. Meuse and were advancing rapidly in a westerly direction. My Bde. Gp. was to proceed forthwith to take up a sort of right flank guard protection to the B.E.F. and was to form the nucleus of an improvised force to be known as Mac Force under the command of Major-General Mason-MacFarlane. General Mason-MacFarlane and I had been G.s. together at Simla and Delhi and were old friends. The Corps and Div. Comdrs. returned with me to my Bde. H.Q. where General Mason-MacFarlane arrived shortly afterwards. The situation was, of course, very nebulous and the



progress made by the German Panzer divisions not exactly known. It was decided that General Mason-MacFarlane should proceed to Orchies where the H.Q. of a French Corps had been situated before the break-through and try and ascertain the situation whilst I brought on the troops as soon as they could be collected and troop-carrying lorries provided for them.

The battalions were working hard on their defences, the gunners busy with their emplacements, all on a very wide front, and it took some time to collect them. They were, however, all ready, and orders for the march issued long before the M.T. arrived. We got off just before dark and had to chance our area and drive with our lights on as speed was so essential. The move was rather a nightmare from my point of view as I had no idea where the Bosche columns were and whether General Mason-MacFarlane had got through to Orchies or not. Any form of reconnaissance was impossible if we were to get there, as ordered, before daylight. We just had to push on at our best speed and hope for the best. The move showed how good units were becoming at any form of M.T. move by day or night and how good the Bde. Staff were becoming in getting them on the move and controlling their movement by means of the simplest of orders. Not a lorry broke down or lost the way, although the route was not easy and quite unknown. We started to arrive in Orchies by 0300 hrs. The town had already been bombed and not a light was showing. I had no idea where to find General Mason-MacFarlane but knew that he would leave me some indication. As I marched along the main street, I saw a blackboard propped against some railings with MAC scrawled on it in white chalk. I was extremely glad to see him and to find that the situation was better than might have been expected. Parts of two French Corps were still south of the R. Scarpe and the German Panzer divisions seemed for the moment more concerned with pushing straight on to the west, which they were doing with alarming rapidity, than with working up north behind the right rear of the B.E.F.

By 1130 hrs. the Bde. was in position behind the R. Scarpe, in touch with a French Moroccan Division on our left and with our right in the air. As usual, we had an enormous front to hold, over 21,000 yds., which precluded any depth or any reserves.

Mac Force was to consist of my own Brigade Gp. and two other Brigades of another Territorial Division. These two brigades had come out to France in April to work on the roads.

They had no signals, no carriers, no anti-tank guns or rifles and, of course, no artillery. Force H.Q. was an improvised affair with no office, no communications and no mess.

General Mason-MacFarlane and I, therefore, shared a H.Q. Bde. Signals provided the communications for the Force, my R.A. Regimental Comdr. became C.R.A., we lent the other two brigades some of our A. Tk. weapons and generally made do. I acted as Deputy Force Comdr. which set the G.O.C. free for the vital work of liaison with the various French formations in the vicinity and with British G.H.Q. under whose command we came directly. This distinctly improvised arrangement worked splendidly from the start in spite of the somewhat severe strain put on my Bde. H.Q. and signals. General Mason-MacFarlane was an inspiration to work under—tremendously energetic, cool, resourceful and immensely cheerful—often in the most uncheering circumstances.

On the evening of May 18th and on the 19th, the Bosche started extending the break-through further north and some of their armoured cars got as far as one of the main river crossings held by my Highlanders. They were, however, only bent on reconnaissance and withdrew at once when they found the bridges held.

On the 19th the situation deteriorated somewhat. The French troops to our front and flanks started to withdraw and the situation became distinctly obscure. We could get no touch with French Corps H.Q., so the General and I, each in a separate armoured car, went to seek them out. In modern war, it is essential that all Comdrs., from Brigade inclusive upwards, should have some form of mobile protection. I always had a section of carriers at Bde. H.Q. and could then always exchange my car for a protected vehicle if there appeared to be any likelihood of being way-laid by the odd patrol. We were glad we were not in an open car as, in a somewhat mixed situation, everyone was very light on the trigger. I took care to keep our Union Jack unfurled to the breeze. We found the French Corps Comdr. but he could tell us very little except that his troops were falling back everywhere in face of the mobile German advanced columns.

On our way back we saw a large force of German bombers dive-bombing the road just in front of us. We pulled in to the side and concealed our cars behind some houses. After an intense attack lasting only about five minutes, the bombers cleared off and we proceeded on our way. We found their target had been a French horsed transport column and they had made a terrible

mess of it. The French, always careless about march discipline of men and M.T., were particularly so as regards their cavalry and horse transport. On this occasion the carts were in a solid block head to tail with no spacing or intervals whatever. There was a deep ditch by the side of the road which prevented them getting off. The sudden air attack had taken them completely by surprise and the road and its vicinity was strewn with dead men and horses and shattered wagons.

The day was a memorable one for the Bde. as, in the space of 24 hours, we shot down 11 German aircraft, mostly by small-arms fire. They were very nervous about their northern flank and were flying very low for reconnaissance and also doing some dive and low-level bombing. All Bns. had souvenirs of iron crosses, German weapons, etc.

One of the pilots, a wounded officer, was brought in to Force H.Q. Whilst General Mason-MacFarlane was interrogating him. I looked through his pack. Every single item of his equipment was of the highest quality, even down to his pencil and india-rubber. The Germans certainly made certain that their fighting men had the best equipment possible down to every detail. That evening the General and I motored to St. Amand, the H.Q. of the French Corps and Division on our left. We went in my Humber brake, a grand type of utility car which is roomy, will stand any amount of knocking about and yet will do go if required. As soon as we debouched on to the main road we became engulfed in the refugee traffic, which had now become simply appalling. They were going in all directions. Many going north to get away from the westward push of the Panzer divisions—others going south from the path of the retreating Belgian Army—others going west in the path of the B.E.F. and French armies of the North and some even going East, having run into the Panzer divisions when they turned North-East towards the channel ports. This flight of refugees was the most pathetic thing I have ever seen—far worse than anything of the same nature in the last War. Young and old from whole villages and towns at a time suddenly took panic from the bombing or from rumours of the approach of German columns, piled a little luggage and some food into a car, a farm cart or even pram and took to the roads where hunger and exhaustion and the German bombers daily took toll of them. As the roads became more congested, their movement became slower and the pace became a slow shuffle. The French civil authorities appeared neither to try and stop them from refugeeing in the first case nor to try and control them

or divert them once they were on the roads. They were the greatest handicap to our movement, were fertile soil for rumours of alarm and despondency, affected the morale of the French troops very adversely and were a material factor in the final capitulation of France.

My English north country driver, good as he was, gazed appalled at the mass of humanity, carts, cars, etc., in front of us. General Mason-MacFarlane, with a glint of battle in his eye, got out from the back and took the wheel, and I got in the front seat beside him. We put the driver in the back. I had often driven with the General before and had vivid recollections of one very hairy drive from Delhi to Simla when our lights went wrong and we went up the Simla Hill in the dark. He drove very fast but always seemed to have a spare inch where you didn't think one existed. We had got to get to St. Amand and the refugees had got to get out of the way. We got there after a most hair-raising drive, sometimes trying the right of the road, then the left and sometimes running up the bank or on to the grass.

The Commander of the Moroccan Division had the reputation of being one of the coming French Generals. He was the youngest of the French Divisional Commanders, fit, hard and full of energy. Of all the French Comdrs. I met during those hectic few weeks, he impressed me the most. I wanted him to take over a bit of my very extended front. As soon as he heard the number of men I had and the length of Front I was holding, no time was wasted in arguing or wrangling. The whole thing was settled in a matter of minutes, and we were on our way home. It was now getting dark and our drive home, with the General again at the wheel, was even more difficult than the drive out. By this time in the evening the refugees were so weary that they were practically asleep on their feet and they were past caring whether they were machine-gunned from the air or run down by a car. No amount of hooting would make them budge.

We arrived back at Force H. Q. very weary in time for a late dinner. We were all beginning to feel the need of some sleep of which we had had little for several days; the situation was comparatively quiet on our front and it looked as though we were going to get some. After dinner, however, a code message was received from G.H.Q. saying that my brigade was to go back to our division on the R. Escant immediately. This was a bad blow for the Force Comdr. as we were the only one of his three brigades that had weapons, equipment and, above all, signals and D.R.s.

He got through to G.H.Q. by telephone, but they replied that the situation on the Escant was not good and that we must try and be back there by early next morning. In spite of the darkness, the very scattered line being held by the Brigade and the total unexpectedness of the order, we were on the move by midnight. I went ahead with one staff officer to Div. H.Q. at Toufflers, where I arrived at 0200 hrs. and found the Divisional Comdr. waiting up for me. He informed me that, since my departure to Macforce the forward Divs. of the B.E.F. had withdrawn through the Escant position and that we were now part of the rearguard. Yesterday morning the Bosche had attacked and got a footing over the river—which was the reason for our recall from Macforce. However, a counter-attack had just been put in by one of the forward brigades which had been completely successful and the situation was restored. I was to be in Div. Reserve.

We just had time to put in an hour's sleep before the Brigade arrived.

Bde. H.Q. was established in a lovely little house in Bouvines which, curiously enough, had been used by my brother as his Bn. H.Q. As soon as the Bde. had arrived, got into their billets and breakfasted, battalions started to reconnoitre approaches to forward brigades. I was called to a Div. Conference and received orders to take over from one of the leading Brigades that evening. Orders were issued and all arrangements made accordingly. Later in the afternoon, however, I was called again to Div. H.Q. where the Corps Comdr. was due at 1500 hrs. In view of the progress made by the German push to the Channel ports round our right rear and bad news from the Belgian Army, all previous orders were cancelled and a general withdrawal was ordered to the line of the Lille defences. The Lille defences were similar to those we had been holding on the Belgian frontier and consisted of an A. Tk. ditch, barbed wire and concrete pill-boxes. The Brigade had to occupy them soon after dark to cover the withdrawal of the two forward Brigades. As may be imagined, it took us all our time to cancel one operation and put into effect another and we had very little time to spare.

Lack of sleep was now becoming a really pressing problem. At Bde. H.Q. we had been on the go for several nights on end, and the days were full of recces., conferences and other vital matters. In the units C.O.s and seconds-in-command were made interchangeable, the second-in-command automatically attending a C.O.s conference at Bde. H.Q. if the C.O. was sleeping. In Bde.



H.Q. we had two-day sleeping hours—1000 to 1200 and 1400 to 1600—and members of the Bde. Staff, clerks, signals, etc., were detailed to sleep during one of those periods whenever we were not on the move. Sleep for the Brigadier was, however, not so easy, with frequent and necessary Divl. conferences as well as the working of the Bde.

The forward Brigadiers expected to have difficulty in breaking away but the counter-attack had shaken the Bosche and they came away at their leisure without being followed up. The morning of May 23rd found us working on the defences and watching for the Bosche advance. I spent the morning walking all round the forward posts which would be impossible to visit again once contact was gained.

During the late afternoon German patrols, making very clever use of the ground, gained contact all along the front. As soon as it was dark, out went the picked fighting patrols on the fronts of both Territorial battalions. They had varied adventures, gained much experience and confidence, and sustained no casualties either from the Bosche or our own side, which was satisfactory. Early in the morning the Bosche put in a heavy raid supported by mortars and infantry guns. They were extremely good at getting their heavy mortars and forward guns into action quickly. There was a great deal of noise, which is definitely part of the stock-in-trade of the modern German soldier—Tommy guns blazing, rockets, flares and shouting with the idea of causing demoralization and confusion. They failed, however, to cross the ditch anywhere. Our casualties were slight.

Every day, of course, German reconnaissance aircraft were over early, followed by the bombers, if targets had been located. The strictest discipline was required to conceal Bde. H.Q. No sentries paraded at the gate, nor were there any conspicuous flags hung out. All transport was parked at least half a mile away and no cars, except those of Brigadiers and over, were allowed to draw up at the gate. At the approach of aircraft all ranks got under cover and stood still; all this was very irksome and needed continual attention. It paid, however, hands down and Bde. H.Q. was never deliberately bombed. Battalion H.Q. took similar precautions; they were easier to conceal from the air and only one of them was deliberately bombed.

During May 24th there was a good deal of hostile air reces., and a certain amount of bombing. Enemy artillery were ranging and started harassing fire on roads and bridges. On the 25th we

were put on half rations and started to live on the country. The position of the B.E.F. now appeared distinctly grim. All mails from Home had long ago ceased. The refugees were a great nuisance and made movement very difficult. They did, however, give one some indication of the approach of German aircraft which were very active. The R.A.F. with all their advanced landing grounds and installations in the hands of the Bosche were operating under a great handicap. One would be struggling along a crowded road in the Bde. car when suddenly one would see the refugees scatter in front all over the countryside. The driver would pull up sharply at the side of the road and into the ditch we would all go as the aircraft swept down the road bombing and machine-gunning. Then into the car and on our way hoping that we should not find broken lorries or other obstructions blocking the road.

May 26th still found us holding the positions we had taken up on the 22nd and we were nowhere seriously pressed. Owing to further French withdrawals, however, we readjusted our position in places and I formed a joint Bde. H.Q. with my neighbouring Brigadier in an old and very strong French fort. This was a dark chasm of a place and very conspicuous, but it was very strong and proof against anything but the very heaviest bombs and shells. The only snag in it was that it was approached by a narrow and vulnerable bridge. However, the other Bde. had been shelled out of its H.Q. and it was only a matter of time before ours was also discovered in view of the complete German local air superiority.

We found this principle of a combined Bde. H.Q. an excellent one in this type of operation. It ensured close liaison and when a withdrawal had to be carried out at short notice, in the absence of any but the shortest orders, it proved of the greatest value. Such an occasion arose the next day, May 27th, when a staff officer from Div. H.Q. arrived at our fort with a verbal order that the division was to withdraw that night to the R. Lys around Armentieres. He heaved a sigh of relief when he found both rear Bde. H. Q. together and in half an hour we sketched out together the plan of withdrawal. The other Brigade had had its main road bridge destroyed the night before, which left it only one improvised bridge and a difficult getaway. We arranged to continue our joint H.Q. and that the other Brigade should start withdrawing as soon as it got dark, covered by my Bde. which should hold on for another three hours and then act as rearguard to the Div.

Both Bdes. had to pass through Lille which had been very heavily bombed and was ablaze. We pressed for very strict traffic control through the town and for our road to be kept clear and the Div. Staff Officer went off to arrange this. As always, in these operations with all bns. on a wide front and with very congested roads the difficulty was to get orders out to the troops in sufficient time for them to make their arrangements before dark. There could be no question of written orders. Whenever possible C.O.s were called in to Bde. H. Q. and the plan explained to them verbally—this was far the most effective method as they were then in a position to act intelligently in the spirit of the order if things went wrong, as of course they often did. Failing this, orders in note form with marked maps were sent out by liaison officers. We had three liaison officers permanently attached to Bde. H.Q. and they were invaluable. They had to be good on a motor cycle, intelligent and of strong physique as their duties were extremely arduous. It is useless for units to detail officers for this work in whom they have no confidence and who merely act as D.R.s. Before dark the Staff Capt. and I.O. went back to Le Bizet to open our new H.Q. and get in touch with Div. H.Q. We got away soon after dark, better than we expected with the usual *contretemps* which always occur in such an operation. Here again the joint Bde. H.Q. proved its value. The other Bde. Staff checked their own units through, whilst my staff controlled the preliminary moves of the rearguard. Half a bn. of the other Bde. failed to appear. How long should we delay the rearguard for them? We settled half an hour, which was the limit we could do with safety. Actually they had missed their way and fetched up on our route later.

Our rear party consisted of the carriers of all three bns. brigaded under one of the seconds-in-command with a certain number of A. Tk. guns. The latter were essential—the only trouble being that they were very immobile and clumsy in the dark as they were towed by lorries and they could not, therefore, go where the carriers could. The night was pitchy dark and the position an extremely difficult one to get away from undiscovered as our bank of the river was low and bare and the Bosche side high and wooded. However, all battalions got away splendidly. The carriers did their job well and imposed another two hours' delay, giving us a good, clear start. In the distance the fires of Lille lit up the night sky. We hoped that the traffic control through the bottleneck would prove effective and that the bridge over the river was still intact. I pushed ahead in the car to see. The road into

Lille was clear and the Divl. Provost, though there were not nearly enough of them, were piquetting it. I told them to block the side roads with some carts and went on to have a look at the bridge. The Bosche aircraft had, we knew, been making a dead set at it. It was still intact but a French Cavalry Bde. which had somehow come in from a side road, was halted right on it, completely blocking the road. Men and horses were dead beat and some of the men were asleep on the horses, others lying or sitting by the roadside. We left the car and found our way through to the front where we found the French Cavalry Bde. Comdr., explained the situation and got him to get his bde. on the move. Then we went back into Lille and met the first bn. of the Bde., marching along in good order. Behind them, however, instead of the rest of the Bde., came a solid mass of French troops. The worst had happened and a whole French Division had cut across on to our road. It was quite impossible to get past them and we could only turn the car and try to get on to our new H.Q. French troops and refugees were, by this time, pouring in from the side streets and we progressed at a funeral pace in a solid block of men, horses, M.T. vehicles and French horsed transport. We had lost touch with the other Bde. H.Q.; with all bns. and with the rest of our Bde. H. Q. After a bit we caught up with a British M.T. Column halted and unable to get on. Everything came to a full-stop and we were still 10 miles from our destination. We left my driver and batman with the car, telling them to come along later if the road cleared and, if not, to leave the car and come on themselves. Myself with my B.M., French interpreter and Asstt. Staff Capt. took to the road and started to thread our way through the mass of halted lorries, horses and cars. Occasionally they moved forward a few hundred yards and then stopped. At 0400 hrs. we arrived at our new H.Q. at Le Bizet, discovered the line we were to hold and went off to reconnoitre it.

By 0900 hrs. all units of the Bde. Gp. had arrived more or less intact, the infantry having marched the best part of 30 miles under extremely difficult conditions. The rear party was completely lost, having found a bridge down and been compelled to take another road. After many wanderings and one or two encounters with Bosche Armd. Cars they turned up later in the day.

There was no question of rest, and, after a hasty breakfast, bns. took up their positions and started digging in. Fortunately the Bosche were even more tired than we were and followed up slowly. The German bombers got some good targets on the congested roads.

I visited bns. and found all ranks in splendid heart. The Staff Capt. and Bde. Supply Officer, as usual, achieved the seemingly impossible and produced rations and petrol from nowhere.

In the afternoon my car, complete with driver, batman and kit, rolled up intact and I went off to Div. H.Q. to see if there were any orders for the next day. The roads were a solid block of troops, mostly French, and refugees, and movement was extraordinarily slow and difficult. Div. H.Q. had been out of touch with Corps since mid-day the day before and could not get touch with the Div. on our left, which should have been in touch with the left of my Bde. The G.I. went off to try and find Corps whilst I went to try and find the Div. on our left. Eventually we ran them to earth. The G.I., killed a few days later, had been a fellow student of mine at Camberley. He had just received orders that the withdrawal was to be continued at 2200 hrs., his Div. and ours withdrawing together. It was then 1700 hrs. and there was no time to be wasted as I knew our Div. H.Q. knew nothing about it. I marked my map from the G.I.'s, took a brief note of the orders and started back to Div. H.Q. as fast as possible.

Just as we were entering a town some two miles from Div. H.Q. the Bosche started shelling us. There was no way round and we had to make a dash for it. Compared with the last War, the shelling we had experienced had been negligible but I still retain a good idea of the sound a shell made that was going to fall fairly close. As we approached the centre of the town, I heard one such and told the driver to stop and everyone to take cover.

The Bde. I.O. thought I was being rather fussy and was somewhat leisurely in his movements; the rest of us darted into the nearest house which had quite a good cellar. The I.O. then realised his danger, but was just too late—he fell down the steps of the cellar with a nasty wound in the leg. The shell burst right over the car, killing two British soldiers. One nasty, jagged fragment went clear through the near front door of the car and out at the driver's door. We got to work on the I.O. with a first field dressing and some morphia which I always carried on me.

The Bosche had now got the main square taped and was pumping in shells at regular intervals. The situation was unpleasant as we had to get the I.O. away and ourselves get to Div. H.Q. We spotted a couple of ambulance men—grand fellows who, in spite of the shelling, produced an ambulance, brought it right up to the door and evacuated our casualty. We then made a dash for our car, which we found to be undamaged except for



the one splinter which would have removed myself and the driver. The G.I. had not returned and the Div. Comdr. and Staff were getting a bit of well-earned sleep. I woke them up and we started to make a hurried plan of withdrawal, which had to be of the simplest as time was very short. My Bde. was again to do rear-guard. We were several times held up by bombers on our way back to the Bde. H.Q.

In the middle of getting out orders there was some fairly close bombing and a whole French cavalry squadron galloped into the farm where we had been at considerable pains to try and conceal the vehicles of Bde. H.Q. The place bristled with horses and men and was a target a bomber might dream of. This was too much. I addressed the squadron commander in a few honeyed words of bad French mixed with Urdu and he removed his command to a place less vulnerable to all concerned.

These withdrawals from river lines always involved many bridge demolitions which were magnificently carried out by the Div. R.E. for which the C.R.E. and his senior Asstt. got well-deserved D.S.O.s. They also entailed some difficult decisions on the part of Brigadiers as to when to give the order to blow—particularly when Bosche advanced parties were seen approaching a bridge whilst some of our troops were still on the other side.

It was now, of course, generally known throughout the Bde. that the Belgians had ceased fighting, that the Bosche had got most of the Channel Ports and that the B.E.F. was to attempt to re-embark at Dunkirk.

Once again, in spite of necessarily sketchy orders, battalions got away splendidly soon after dark. There was a tremendous burst of firing and at zero hour one bn. was delayed over an hour but again the Bosche failed to maintain contact and did not press us unduly. The march, which was again nearly 30 miles for the rearmost units, was even worse than the night before. The roads were completely blocked by troops, transport and refugees. Again we had to abandon the Bde. car and take to our feet. At 0800 hrs. we were still walking and still five miles from the place I had to meet the Div. Comdr. for orders. A most intelligent D.R. then nosed me out with a note from him telling me to get on the back of the bike and come along as soon as possible. Amid waves and cheers from the Bde. Staff, we set off on a journey which was almost as precarious as that we had had at St. Amant with General Mason-MacFarlane. The D.R. had been a dirt-track rider in

civil life and was in his element. We darted under horses' necks, skidded round lorries, butted people in the back and eventually fetched up at a small pub where I found the Divl. Comdr.

The Bde. was to be collected on arrival into a rest area in the vicinity of Rexpoed village, behind another division. All kits and surplus equipment were to be destroyed, and orders were to issue later from Div. H.Q. for a further withdrawal during the night into the Dunkirk Salient. The difficulty was going to be to get these orders out to units and for units to collect their men who were now spread over many miles of road. Our invaluable liaison officers had stuck to me like glue and they went off to contact C.O.s and give them their Battalion R.V.s which we chose off the map. The B.M. and I set off on foot to find a suitable Bde. H.Q. and to try and collect information of the whereabouts and progress of battalions.

In the midst of our wanderings, to our joy, we came across the old brigade car, complete with driver and my batman, both tired and dirty and full of oaths, but smiling and cheerful, as is the way of the British soldier in adversity.

By 1300 hrs. the bulk of the Bde. had been collected in their areas, having been marching continually since 2100 hrs. the previous night. The men got a meal, lookouts and A.A. sentries were posted, and by 1500 hrs. the remainder got down to some well-earned sleep. Each bn. had a pln. of the A. Tk. Coy. with them.

The Highland Bn., which had been doing rearguard to the Bde., was practically complete, the other two bns. which had been mixed up in the worst of the traffic jam had still a good many missing. One Bde. of the Division was entirely lost and we never saw them again until we got back to England. They missed their way somehow, failed to connect up with the remainder of the Div. and got back to Dunkirk on their own.

There was a conference at Div. H.Q. at noon, and I lunched there afterwards and met the Div. Comdr. whose Div. was holding the line in front of my Bde. He had been one of my Instructors at Camberley, and is now commanding a Corps in England. He said he would call on me if he was pressed and wanted assistance, but that nothing of the sort appeared likely as everything seemed quiet on his front. Except for the presence of Bosche aircraft at frequent intervals and for a certain amount of bombing, very few noises of battle could be heard.

I returned to Bde. H.Q., found everything settled in there and dropped my batman and my kit with instructions that he was

to sort out one or two of my cherished possessions and burn everything else. The Staff Capt. and Bde. Supply Officer went off to arrange for rations and petrol and the Bde. Major and the head clerk, not without a certain amount of relish, set about the destruction of every book and manual, every Army Form and bit of paper we possessed at Bde. H.Q. The typewriters were broken up and we were left with such maps as we needed, and with notebooks and message pads. We carried on like this quite happily for many weeks.

As may be imagined, the reply to every awkward query for months afterwards as to why we had not complied with such and such a document was invariably: "It is much regretted that all reference to the matter in question was destroyed at Dunkirk." As we had not got orders for the next move, I sent the Asstt. Staff Capt. to Divl. H.Q. to wait there until he got them. My car driver was in need of a rest, and I left him behind. About 1530 hrs. taking the Bde. Transport Officer with me, I set off to visit bns. which I had not been able to do since they had got in. They had by now all had instructions that our next move would take us inside the Dunkirk Salient and that only essential transport, such as carriers and wireless sets, could be taken and that all other transport was to be systematically and thoroughly destroyed forthwith.

With the Bde. Transport Officer driving we made for Rexpoed. We saw two of the C.O.s and were on our way to the third when we heard sounds of firing and two very excited soldiers ran up and said that German Tanks had broken through the Div. in front and had just entered Rexpoed. I thought this unlikely as we had only just left the place, but we turned to get back to Bde. H.Q. to see if any information had come in. We had not gone 100 yds. before we saw German tanks coming out of Rexpoed and going in the direction of Bde. H.Q. Our road in that direction was blocked. We turned again and made for the H.Q. of the Highland Bn. which we had been on our way to before, but saw two German tanks coming down the road. Only one road was now possible—the one that lead to the other Bde. of my Div. Never had the Bde. Transport Officer turned a car on a narrow road in such a quick time. We sped along at racing speed and got clear just in time as German tanks debouched on the road behind us.

On the way to the other Bde. H.Q. we warned a Fd. Bty. of what was afoot and they soon spotted some tanks and started shooting at them.

On my arrival at the other Bde. H.Q. the Brigadier had just had information from his battalions that they were engaged with German mobile forces. I borrowed his wireless set and explained the situation to the Div. Comdr. We then set off for Div. H.Q. which I knew my Bde. H.Q. would try and contact if they could.

Meanwhile the German troops, consisting of tanks and mobile infantry, after leaving parties to mop up my bns., had gone straight on to my Bde. H.Q. where they arrived about 1700 hrs. The B.M. was in the office and my batman had the whole of my kit laid out on the grass trying to make out what items he should try and save and what he should destroy. The problem was solved for him by the tanks which destroyed the whole lot and Bde. H.Q. into the bargain. The B.M., with my batman driving, leapt into a car and got into action two 2-pdr. A. Tk. guns which were only a few hundred yards away. They stayed with them directing their fire and encouraging them, with my batman doing runner and odd job man as casualties became heavy. The guns fought splendidly and knocked out two or three tanks before they were knocked out themselves with almost every man of the gun crews killed or wounded.

The B.M. got a M.C. and my batman a M.M. for this very gallant little action.

The B.M. then got away what he could of Bde. H.Q. and tried to get through to Div. H.Q. where he hoped he might get news of me if I had managed to avoid the German tanks.

I arrived at Div. H.Q. just as he called up on the wireless. He had established another H.Q. in a village further back, but had lost all the other officers of the Bde. Staff with the exception of the Signal Officer. Div. H.Q. was becoming distinctly unhealthy, and the Div. Comdr. decided that he would move to my new Bde. H.Q. and form a joint H.Q. with me. The next decision was how to get there? My Asstt. Signal Officer had just blown in. He was certain that the left-hand road was clear as he had just come that way, but suggested he should do a bit of preliminary scouting on a push-bike. He set off and never returned so we took the other road. We learnt later that he had walked straight into the Bosche and been taken prisoner.

All went well with us on the other road until we came upon a troop of A. Tk. guns to which my Staff Capt. had attached himself. They had been having, and were apparently still having, a little private battle, with some German tanks up the road. They appeared quite pleased with the way the battle was going, but

the trouble was it was right on the road we had to take to the new H.Q. and very close to it. We got on to the B.M. on the wireless and moved him to a more suitable spot where we eventually joined him about 2100 hrs. The night was as obscure as the situation, the only bright spot being that all bns. knew the general intention and would, I knew, conform to it to the best of their ability if they were able. Liaison Officers and D.R.s had been sent out to try and gain contact with battalions.

At 2300 hrs. I held a conference at Bde. H.Q. which was attended by the C.O. of one battalion, the 2nd-in-Command of another and the Intelligence Officer of the Highland Bn. The latter had got through with the greatest difficulty as the battalion was closely surrounded by the Germans. The story of the afternoon's happenings was briefly as follows:

All Bns. had been attacked by tanks and mobile infantry in their rest areas about 1645 hrs. The attack broke through the troops in front of us so suddenly that they were unable to give us any warning. The battalion H.Q. of one of the Territorial Bns. had been heavily attacked and set on fire. Both Territorial Bns. had withdrawn a few miles and had had a number of casualties but both had managed to knock out a few tanks. They were not being pressed, although German forces were about between them and Bde. H.Q. They anticipated no trouble in continuing the withdrawal and I ordered them to get on with it immediately and aim at being within the Dunkirk defences at given R.V.s as soon after daylight as possible.

The Highland Bn. were in much worse case. They had been attacked and surrounded about 1645 hrs. by German tanks and Infantry.

Before bns. went into their rest areas, I had detailed to each of them a platoon of the Bde.—25-mm. A. Tk. guns using the 2-pdr. Anti-Tk. Bty. to give depth to the A. Tk. defence and to protect Bde. H.Q.

The Highlanders had put up a grand fight, resisting strongly every time the Bosche tried to close in. All their 25-mm. guns had been knocked out, but they employed their A. Tk. rifles with good effect and spoke very highly of the hitting power of this weapon. The Adjt., an extremely good shot with any weapon, had fired 40 rds. himself—and the German tanks didn't like it. Eventually, they had ceased their attacks but the bn. was now closely surrounded with all the roads blocked. Casualties had been heavy both in Officers and men.



I sent the I.O. back and also another officer by a different route with orders that they were to split up into small parties and break through under cover of darkness and join me at a given R.V. early next morning. The successful extrication of the bn. was in a large part due to the Bn. Intelligence Officer who wormed his way through again with the orders. He got a well-deserved M.C. and later became Bde. I.O. and then O.C. A. Tk. Coy. His sudden death later, after a short illness, was a great loss. Both Divl. Comdrs. were in the room whilst the conference had been going on, the other division having started its withdrawal through us as soon as it got dark.

In the Bde. our casualties in A. Tk. weapons had been heavy. We lost all our 25-mm. guns in the action and most of the 2-pdrs. Although heavily outnumbered they gave a very good account of themselves but would naturally have done better if they (the 25-mms. especially) had had more previous practice in firing their guns. We could have done with many more of them.

After "dinner"—a sandwich and a whiskey-and-soda—at 0030 hrs. the Divl. Comdr. held a conference. He had still no news of the missing Bde. but the other Bde. which had been behind me had not been pressed after dark and was withdrawing according to plan.

The conference was attended by the Div. Comdr. and the G.I. and myself and my B.M. Its object was to decide on the next move of Div. and Bde. H.Q. German mobile forces were now well inside the Div. area and might well be already astride our road back to Dunkirk. We had only a handful of soldiers with us, the remains of my Bde. protective pln. and a couple of 2-pdr. guns. If we waited where we were until daylight we could be of no further assistance to the troops and might well get both H.Q.s captured. We decided to move back inside the Dunkirk defences at 0300 hrs. (May 30th).

The conference had not been going five minutes before loud snores came from my B.M. who had fallen asleep in his chair. We decided to call it a day and get an hour's sleep. My Bde. H.Q. was sadly reduced. The Bde. Supply Officer, Asstt. Staff Capt. and both Signal Officers were missing, but all but one of them, who had been captured, joined up next day. The Intelligence Officer had been wounded the day before and was one of the last of the casualties to be evacuated to England. Both French interpreters had been taken prisoner, but escaped by

crawling down a sewer and both joined up with me again next day.

I felt confident that the bulk of the bns. would get back all right during the night. They had a lot of practice in night movement and the Bosche force which had attacked us appeared to be split up and disorganised and had suffered considerable casualties.

At 0300 hrs. we got on the move and established another H.Q. with Div. H.Q. just inside the Dunkirk defences. All bns. withdrew successfully, the Highlanders having a sharp engagement in the early morning. Although very weary, they were in great spirits and longed to have another go at the Bosche. The C.O. got an immediate D.S.O., the Adj. an M.C. and a number of men in all battalions got D.C.M.s and M.M.s. It was very hard to ascertain the number of casualties we had suffered, particularly as a large number of men had got separated from their units in the dark and marched through to Bray where they automatically came under the control of the embn. authorities and were not allowed to rejoin the Bde. Actually our total casualties in the Bde. were under 500, and in the Bde. Gp. about 700.

As soon as bns. had reported in, Bde. H.Q. moved back and the B.M. and I motored and walked down to Bray with the idea of trying to collect any of our men who might be there. We found large parties from all three bns. but the Embn. Comdt. (quite rightly) refused to relinquish them as he wanted to embark as many troops as possible as soon as shipping of any sort became available.

The scene on the beaches and in the Salient has been described by better pens than mine. The beaches were a mass of men and it is amazing, in view of the determined efforts made by the Bosche air force to prevent our embarkation, that there were comparatively so few casualties there. Behind the beaches there was a scene of widespread devastation caused by the German bombers and by our own wholesale destruction of our transport and equipment.

Dunkirk, incessantly bombed and badly battered, was ablaze a few miles to the West. In the afternoon I was called to Div. H.Q. and ordered to reconnoitre a final position at Dunkirk for the rear parties of the B.E.F. to hold immediately before embarkation. The Bde. car was almost on its last legs and made a loud roaring noise like a badly broken-winded horse. It was dark when I got back with my report and, whilst going through it with

the Divl. Comdr., orders came through from Corps that the Div. was to be prepared to embark at Bray at 2300 hrs. We ran the old Bde. car right on to the beach before we smashed her up. The embarkation was run entirely by the Embarkation Comdt. and his Staff and was most efficiently done considering the numerous difficulties he had to face. At the last minute, owing to shortage of shipping at Bray, the greater portion of the Bde. was moved along to Dunkirk. The remainder, with my Bde. H.Q. and Divl. H.Q., embarked at Bray. We filed down on to the beach and then along a narrow plankway jutting upwards of 100 yds. out to sea. We stood there for two solid hours—almost the most wearisome two hours we had had, and then marched back again as the tide was too low for the ships to get in.

About 0230 hrs. a Bosche bty. started shelling the beaches with the greatest accuracy. We burrowed into the sand and the shooting stopped as suddenly as it had begun. The casualties were carried up to the dressing station and we again sat down to wait. At first light the German bombers started to appear and we could then see the mass of craft of all descriptions from destroyers downwards standing by to take us off. A young naval officer pointed out to me a large 16-oar ship's boat lying well up the beach and asked me to get 20 men into it and pull out to any ship we liked. My B.M. and myself, driver, batman, D.R. and 15 private soldiers started to shove it into the water. Except for my B.M. and myself none of the others had ever been in a small boat before. As soon as it started to bob about on the water, everyone jumped in with the result that it settled hard on to the sand again. We tried again with the same result. Eventually, after wading chest-high in water, we got her afloat. Our troubles, however, had then only started. The tide was low with a choppy sea and the ships had to stand some way out. I settled my crew down to their oars with the B.M. as stroke. No one except the B.M. had ever handled an oar before. It was not exactly a propitious moment to learn rowing but they soon learnt that the description I read once in a novel regarding the mighty doings of the hero in the Oxford and Cambridge boat race, "All rowed fast but none so fast as he," was undoubtedly an unwise method of procedure and resulted in a tangle of oars and little progress. I stood in the stem shouting "one, two—in, out" after the style of the commentator of the boat race and eventually, with many painful lapses, we started to move. I steered for the longest and narrowest destroyer which was lying furthest out, regardless of the suggestions that we should board some of the fatter, more

comfortable-looking craft lying nearer in. My crew stuck nobly to their oars and, after a bit, we got on terms with the Divl. Comdr.'s boat, which was being regally towed out, and finally passed her.

Climbing on board that destroyer was almost like setting foot on England. The sailors from the Comdr. downwards were simply marvellous. Our R.A.F. fighters made the most gallant efforts to keep the bombing down but, operating as they were from aerodromes in England, they could only spend a very short time in the battle area before they had to go back and refuel. The ship did not weigh anchor until 0600 hrs. by which time they had taken on board as many men as it would possibly hold. The Comdr. gave the Div. Comdr. and myself his own cabin and, in a few minutes, the Div. Comdr. and G. I. were fast asleep. I was somehow too tired for sleep and lay listening to the din of the bursting bombs and the battle of the ship's A. A. armament as we zigzagged our way across the channel.

We arrived at Dover at 0900 hrs. on the 31st of May. Train after train drew in at the station; we were bundled in without any attempt at sorting out the different units and departed to an unknown destination. The whole of the train arrangements were excellent. Kind voluntary helpers at various stations supplied us with all the food and drink we could possibly want and, at 1800 hrs., we arrived at one of the B.E.F. sorting depots which I found to be commanded by an old friend of mine, who made me extremely comfortable. The remainder of the Bde. were scattered in similar depots all over the country. Two days later I was informed by the War Office of my Brigade's concentration area in the North of England and went up there immediately.

So ended this amazing campaign which lasted in all 22 days from the time the Germans invaded Belgium until we arrived in Dover. During this short time the French, Dutch and Belgian armies had been decisively defeated. The Dutch and Belgian armies had laid down their arms and it appeared unlikely that the French Army would put up very much further resistance. The B.E.F., never defeated in the field, and always able to hold their own when attacked, had been forced into retreat by the sudden German break-through of the French on our right, thus exposing our right flank, the whole of the L. of C., aerodromes, supply depots, etc., and giving the Germans access to the channel ports. Our Air Force were compelled to vacate their forward aerodromes, leaving the German Air Force in a very strong position of which they took full advantage. The B.E.F., in addition

to suffering a large number of casualties in men, lost the whole of their guns and equipment and were driven into the sea. There is no doubt that we had suffered a major military disaster. Nevertheless, the whole weight of the immensely numerically superior German Army and Air Force had failed to break the small British force and was unable to prevent it from re-embarking. This in itself was a stupendous military operation reflecting the greatest credit on the British Navy and Mercantile Marine and on the R.A.F. as well as on the British soldier, who had shown that 20 years of peace and prosperity had not dimmed his fighting qualities.

The British soldier felt that he was at least the equal of the German whenever they had met on anything like level terms.

For the above reasons Dunkirk will always remain an epic in the history of British Arms.

As regards my own Brigade, I felt extremely pleased with the way they had stood the test. Scarcely more than half trained when the operations started, they had marched and counter-marched, moved long distances on foot and M.T. by day and night and finally carried out a series of difficult rearguard operations in contact with the enemy with considerable credit. They had gained confidence in themselves and had learnt more about war in three weeks than in many months of training under peace conditions. There were, however, still large gaps in their training which would have to be filled before they reached the standard required.

It would be as well to pause here to consider some of the lessons we had gained from this short but very decisive campaign.

We must give full credit to the German Army for their devastating offensive. They had been allowed years of preparation and training for it and they had made full use of them. Personally I have no patience with those who belittle the Germans or who try and make out that the thoroughness of their methods, the rigorousness of their training, their insistence on efficiency and the determination with which they press home their attacks are not in accordance with British characteristics and that we should search for other methods. Success in modern war is not obtained without efficiency and completeness of preparation and ruthless drive and determination on the battlefield. We should examine all the German methods and those we consider admirable from a military point of view we should adopt or improve upon.



The chief factor in the German success was their realisation of the power of the tank and how to use it in large numbers and for deep penetration or wide flanking moves. This was merely the teaching of our own soldiers who had originally developed the tank. General Fuller never ceased to advocate a higher and higher degree of mechanisation. The Germans merely worked on these ideas and put them into practice. In suitable tank country the only real answer to the tank is the tank or a very large number of mobile A. Tk. guns, which then become really very akin to an inferior type of tank themselves. Once they had achieved a break-through, the German Panzer divisions met with little real opposition as the French tanks, quite good in themselves, were not organised or trained to operate in large numbers and were distributed about the place in penny packets.

The second big factor in the German success, to my mind, was the way in which their bombers co-operated closely with the ground troops on the battlefield. This demanded a high standard of training and a policy of decentralisation and trust in comparatively junior commanders. A Bde. Comdr. was empowered to call bombers on to a target without his demand having to go through several other channels. It is of little use bombing to influence next week's battle when the result of this week's battle is still in doubt. Our Army and Air co-operation on the battlefield did not appear to me to have reached anything like such a high standard. The R.A.F. were, of course, soon operating under such disadvantageous conditions that this comparison may hardly be a fair one.

This decentralisation to and trust in junior commanders is a feature of modern German leadership and was a big factor in the speed of their advance. Young commanders, well forward in the advance, encouraged to use their initiative; short verbal orders and the free and commonsense use of wireless, were all factors in the German success which we can copy with advantage.

The use of wireless is a point worth mentioning. The Germans used their wireless with the greatest freedom in mobile operations, seldom bothering to use code in a fluid situation. We suffered constantly from enforced wireless silence and from having to encode practically everything. We can, and have, learnt much from the German use of their wireless.

To turn for a minute to the French Army, of which my Bde. saw more than most. Several extremely interesting books have been written on the subject of the sudden and dramatic collapse

of what had been considered by many people the finest army in the world. It struck me on first arrival in France that the French soldier had carried his sloppiness of bearing and turnout to extremes. I am sure that our insistence on good saluting, good turnout and carriage and on drill pay dividends in times of stress. The first French soldier I saw at Cherburgh was on sentry duty; he was smoking a cigarette, hands in his pockets and his rifle leaning against the sentry-box. He saluted very perfunctorily officers of his own army but took not the slightest notice of those of other nationalities, whatever their rank. True he was not in the front line, but it gave an impression of apathy and indiscipline. When active operations actually started, one noticed at once their lack of any sort of march discipline and A.A. precautions which laid them open to heavy casualties from the low bomber. They realised early on that their weapons and equipment were far inferior to the German and they appeared to lose confidence both in themselves and their commanders. The latter, particularly the Divl. Comdrs., appeared in most cases to be much too old to stand up to the racket of modern war. There were, of course, notable exceptions in the commanders, as there were in the troops. Some of the latter we came across fought most gallantly after enduring incredible privations in the way of long marches and lack of sleep. They were undoubtedly very much affected by the state of the mass of refugees on the roads and troops and refugees appeared to affect one another with a virus of apathy and defeatism.

In the British Army the C-in-C. was determined that commanders of active formations should be young and fit men. Having been attached to a Bde. Staff in France for a short time in the last war I could compare what an immensely greater strain there was on a Brigadier in this war. I worked out roughly that in the first 18 days of the operations, I got an average of three hours' sleep in the 24 and, in the last four days, an average of only half an hour. This was in itself a big strain and I personally—and I know many other Brigadiers say the same—have had to do far more walking both on the road and across country in these days of mechanisation than I ever did in the days of the horse.

Our arms and equipment were first-class in almost every particular. I should have liked a heavier mortar in the Bde. as the Bosche had, and some machine-guns and Bofors guns as part of the Bde. also. The Bde. Comdr. also badly needs a section

of carriers which he can use to get about in with a certain amount of security against odd patrols in this war of no fronts.

Absolute physical fitness of officers and men is an essential in modern war—fitness of a far higher degree than we have hitherto regarded as adequate.

My wife joined me on the 1st June and we had two quiet days before I went to reform the Bde. in our new area. In those critical times there was no question of leave beyond 48 hours as, if ever Hitler had a chance to invade England, now was the time before the B.E.F. could be re-equipped.

I found Bde. H.Q. starting to assemble in a delightful little English village with the battalions in excellent camps in the vicinity. The weather was hot and rainless. The Bde. Office was in the village hall; the officers and their wives lived in the village pub next door and my wife and I were given a lovely cottage, fully furnished and completely modernised and equipped.

Officers and men gradually started to rejoin from the various sorting depots to which they had been despatched. At that time we could not tell exactly the extent of our casualties. People we had thought to be killed or prisoners suddenly rolled up from nowhere. Three subalterns, who had been taken prisoner on May 29th, escaped shortly after we had re-embarked, made their way to the coast, got away in a rowing boat and were picked up in the Channel. I lost only two Officers of my Bde. Staff—the Intelligence Officer wounded and signal officer a prisoner.

We had not a form or a typewriter in the office and functioned with note-books and carbon paper—which resulted in everything getting done so quickly that the clerks were able to get some exercise instead of staying in the office until all hours. The men rolled up with nothing but their gas masks—their rifles, mostly affected by sea water, had been taken from them at the sorting depots. There was an imminent threat of invasion and there was not a weapon or a round of ammunition in the Bde. On June 17th, the French Army laid down their arms. It was a depressing time from every point of view.

The Bde. now went through its lowest period. After the strain and strenuous days of Dunkirk the men were suffering a reaction. They had been treated as heroes on arrival Home and it had been somewhat overdone. We had lost a good many N.C.O.s and the Territorial Battalions particularly were very short of trained instructors.

I had hoped that we should be made up to strength with trained officers and men but all bns. got large drafts of less than half trained men with no N.C.O.s. In addition, all B.E.F. bns. had to send off four officers and a large number of N.C.O.s to newly forming battalions and there was a constant drain on officers and N.C.O.s for every form of job. If the bns. had been fully trained, with trained N.C.O.s and instructors before we went to France, they might have competed with this situation—as it was, it needed a hard and sustained effort on the part of all ranks to pull the show together. It was long and uphill work but the Army, Corps and Divl. Schools for officers and N.C.O.s effected a very marked improvement. I never allowed a bn. to refuse a vacancy and always asked for more. They protested and groaned and we got many a raspberry for sending insufficiently prepared people on courses. There were just not the instructors available in the Bde. to train them.

After a time, however, the policy started to pay dividends and, by the time I left the Bde., nearly every Coy. Comdr. and a proportion of the subalterns had been through a platoon or Coy. Commander's course at a school and large numbers of N.C.O.s had been trained.

I had all my original C.O.s which was, of course, a tremendous help in getting things going again. My Bde. Staff had once again to be almost entirely reconstituted. The B.M., having had his M.C. duly presented by H.M. The King at Buckingham Palace, went off as G. II to the Division and later as an Instructor to the Staff College. The Staff Captain, who had survived Dunkirk in spite of being far from fit, had to have a rest and was replaced by the "Q" learner who had been understudying him for four months and was all ready to step into the job. The Bde. Transport Officer went as second-in-command to one of the new battalions.

During the summer we were detached from the Division and came into command reserve. We got some excellent training in splendid training country.

Mid-September, when the air battle over Britain hung in the balance, found us all ready for the expected invasion. The winter found us on the coast—and I think we left it considerably more unpleasant to land upon than we found it. In March we got some useful training with tanks and had got ahead of us a strenuous summer's training programme. The Brigade was fit, hard, cheerful and ready for anything, but still with some gaps

in their training that would be filled as time and opportunity offered.

Suddenly the cable arrived ordering me back to India. A year is a long time to be with one formation in war-time. We had been places and seen things together, shared our triumphs and disasters and I left them with the greatest regret.

And now, for the battle of the Atlantic—and having survived that, the war in the East. The news that reaches us on board is scanty but we hear sufficient to realise that big things are afoot which will call from India every bit as high a war effort as is being undertaken so wholeheartedly at Home.



## COMBINED OPERATIONS—SEA, LAND AND AIR

BY AUSPEX

The object of all combined operations must be to further the interests of all, of two, or of one of the three services. In the last case, it may be any one of the three, and the methods of furthering the interests of all or any are legion. It does not seem that we have really examined the whole problem. At present we think in terms of a navy operating on the oceans and even in the narrow seas covered by its aircraft carriers and covered by shore-based aircraft whenever it is possible to maintain shore-based aircraft in position in sufficient force. If we now at last accept, as we must, the fact that ships cannot move safely outside the range of their own shore-based aircraft and inside the range of the enemy's shore-based aircraft, then we have to satisfy ourselves that we are fully aware of the occasions when ships, whether naval or mercantile, can take the risk. We must also fully understand how we are to instal our own shore-based air forces so as to cover the movements of our ships. This, anywhere away from our home land, is in itself a combined operation of the two services and may well be one involving all three.

There are many other aspects and here is one. If ships must move within range of the enemy's aircraft, then they may well be attacked. The best operation for us in this case is that they should be attacked at the time and at the place where we wish them to be attacked, and that time and that place will be when and where we can meet that attack with a far superior air force. The chances are that the attack will not be delivered if the enemy knows that the superior air force is within range. That will deter him and we will have won before the action starts, because it will never start. On the other hand, he will attack if he does not know that the superior air force is ready for him. We have, therefore, the big problem of putting the superior air force into position without his knowing it. Owing to our sea power we may well be able to do this. It will be a part of the whole operation.

We will admit now that land forces are unable to maintain themselves against a greatly superior enemy air force for their depots of supply and their convoys will be gradually whittled down by enemy air action. In addition, although well entrenched, continual air bombardment must have a demoralising effect

after a time. In fact, we know it has. We cannot expect always to be superior in the air, but we can expect that if we have not too great an inferiority, our ground and air tactics will be so designed as to make the enemy waste his superior air forces until we can take a sufficient toll of them to enable us bit by bit to reach parity and to obtain the upper hand in time. This may well be done by the interplay of our own land and air forces which will lead him to apply his bombers, for instance, at a time and place when our fighters can get at them successfully. We have our definite major and minor air tactics but we have no real knowledge of major and minor air-and-land tactics which, successfully applied, may make up for air inferiority or even for land inferiority. I will give two examples.

The first is that by the continual hammering by armoured forces at the enemy's L. of C. we may reduce his ability to supply his forward landing grounds and so we may keep his aircraft grounded. We may also force him in the same way to supply a considerable forward land force from the air, thus reducing his available bombers, and his air transports for shifting troops. At the same time, by moving forward our fighter aerodromes, we may get them into range of these same supply aircraft and take a heavy toll of them.

The second example is of aircraft bombing an enemy's forward land concentrations and forcing him to disperse them in such a way that our land forces get the opportunity of beating each dispersed part in detail.

The above are only two examples of a very wide and interesting range of combined sea, air and land operations.

For instance, a land operation by mobile armoured forces may well be staged solely with the purpose of driving an enemy's air force off its most effective aerodromes and for rendering it ineffective to help the land operations or to oppose our air force; or forcing it to concentrate on cramped or less well defended aerodromes where it can be destroyed by our own air forces; or, at any rate, driving it to distant aerodromes to render it innocuous. As the importance of the air arm grows, so will the importance of such operations increase.

There is a general attitude about that the land forces ask for air assistance solely for their own ends. If one examines the examples above, one sees how wrong this attitude is. A land operation may well be staged solely in the interests of the air forces and so may a land-and-sea operation.

Combined land and sea operations are pretty well known to us and we at this late date understand that they cannot well be conducted without effective air defence, both ground and air, and this probably means effective offensive as well.

During the past 20 months of war we have seen chances missed of taking a heavy toll of enemy forces by the effective use of combined operations and we have seen our land forces denuded of air assistance and, in retreat, almost forced into complete disaster. An amphibious nation, we possess no fast seaplane or flying-boat fighters, so badly needed for operating from the seadromes of the calm lagoons and little harbours that dot the coasts of the world, and whence we could deny the enemy's air-borne land power.

In these same amphibious operations we have seen heavy losses inflicted by enemy aircraft on our naval and mercantile shipping. We do not seem to be very clear as to when and how we should undertake these operations. Whether we should put all we have into them or just put in enough to inflict severe damage on the enemy but not so much that air attack will prevent our re-embarking virtually the whole force and its equipment.

This war will be won by the German people tiring of the losses inflicted on their power and the date of victory is postponed whenever they know that they have inflicted heavy losses in either men or material on us.

We must never allow ourselves to be driven against the ropes by a heavy-weight opponent at any time. The B. E. F. was saved by the fortuitous circumstance that the enemy thrust it back to a place where the R. A. F. could give him a straight left with its fighters. We have to balance what is worth holding against the chances of our holding it with great eventual loss to ourselves.

Many in the Army have long urged that we must have our own air arm for our own direct purposes so that we can use it to full effect as the Navy have used theirs to break Italian sea power in harbour and at sea, and to spot and hamper the raider. Until we have this air arm, neither we, nor anyone else, will ever fully grasp what we can effect with its help or what we, and others, now miss without it.

We will win this war: let us win it with as little loss to ourselves in men, material and prestige, as we can manage.

No commander to-day can be allowed to think only in terms of his own service. Air operations spread across land and sea:

land operations shift in a matter of days from coast to coast. The three services in their higher branches are really one service and might well be made one now with three closely related arms—sea, land and air.

Actually, to give this type of operations a special name, "Combined Operations," is clear proof that we still classify them as something abnormal. We need a doctrine of "combined operations" in the widest sense and that doctrine can only be produced by a "Combined Staff" with one man at its head: but it must be a clear and definite doctrine and not merely a set of plans for a particular operation or for this or that eventuality. Combined tactics spread over hundreds of miles and strategy over thousands.

## WHEELS OVER ERITREA

By LT.-COL. G. S. R. WEBB, M.C.

One of the most interesting aspects of the present war is the speed with which large forces cover what would hitherto have been considered impossible distances. In this is implied the flexibility of modern infantry. A force, firmly established in a carefully prepared position, must be ready to move with all its impedimenta at very short notice, perhaps for some hundreds of miles. Here is an example which occurred recently. It may be found lacking in interest owing to the necessity for avoiding reference to units and places but the spectre behind my shoulder menacingly brandishing his blue pencil forbids such embellishments.

Picture to yourself a Brigade Group facing long-prepared enemy positions and keyed up to the last pitch in readiness to attack on a large scale. For months dumps have secretly been built up; ammunition, petrol, engineer and other stores, all are ready to hand. The last telephone cable has been laid, the last reconnaissance made. It is ten o'clock in the morning and tomorrow at first light we shall make our attack.

There have been indications that the enemy may be thinning out preparatory to a withdrawal, though we can hardly believe it. He is very much stronger numerically than we are. Patrol reports begin to come in, a trench empty here, a hill evacuated there. It seems that the enemy really is going; that all our plans are wasted. Telephone wires hum, conferences are held; this and that plan is considered. Then comes news that the Divisional Commander is arriving at 1200 hours. A C.O.'s conference is ordered for 1300 hours. At 1200 hours the Divisional Commander appears. He wastes no time but explains that news from the whole front confirms that the enemy withdrawal has commenced. A general advance has been ordered. His pencil traces a roundabout route on the map.

"Your Group, Brigadier, will go round this flank. I hope to cut off the enemy at this point. You must be off at once."

He goes on to speak of difficult country, the unreliability of the map, of steep *khors* and dense jungles, and the almost complete absence of water. He promises a good supply of Army



Track. Then he turns to other administrative problems. Meanwhile the brigade-major beckons to a liaison officer. "Warn all units to be ready to move in an hour's time," he whispers.

At 1257 hours the Divisional Commander leaves. The battalion commanders are waiting. The Brigadier has exactly three minutes in which to make his plan. After a hurried conference with his staff he sends for his commanders. Calmly, as if dictating from a long-considered plan, he gives out his verbal orders.

In the meantime every unit in the group is hurriedly packing vehicles with the equipment which had been prepared for to-morrow's attack. Water containers come in for particular attention. At 1330 hours Brigade Headquarters are on the move led by those practised pathfinders, the motor machine-gun companies of the Sudan Defence Force. Behind come the leading lorries of a column that will be forty miles long. A great wall of dust rises up from the cotton soil of the Sudan as the long line of vehicles winds its way, regardless of enemy bombers, towards the distant hills of Eritrea. One thought animates our minds, "Will we be in time?"

At 1700 hours the head of the column halts; the tail, of course, has not started yet. But the light has almost gone and we are in a country that has seldom known a wheeled track; progress will be terribly slow if we attempt to go on in the dark. But there will be a moon later on so we will get some food and what rest we can. The sun drops behind the horizon and the tropic night settles over the sea of dried elephant grass. Despite the rich cotton soil there is never a sign of habitation for there is no water here except in the short, fitful rainy season. Over on our left we could discern clusters of low hills where but this morning the enemy had his outposts. Hills familiar in outline to us who had watched them for so long yet strangely unreal in the fading light. Hills which when tenanted by armed men had seemed to frown mysteriously but which now, abandoned in a headlong flight, had become once more just age-old heaps of soil and rocks. Away to our front, out of sight, were the armoured cars and machine-gun vans of the S.D.F.; our only reminder of their presence had been an occasional returning car from which stepped a dusky warrior with a message reporting "all clear" on such and such a bound.

At long last the moon rose and soon it was light enough to go on. Hour after hour we ploughed our way through that sea

of grass, peering over steering wheels for the ill-defined camel track through clouds of dust. Moonlight gave place to sunshine and presently we crossed the border into Eritrea, a feeling of exultation in our hearts. The country changed too, for soon we were twisting through scrubby jungle with only the wheel marks of our leading troops to guide us. We could see that they had sometimes been at fault. We crossed a road that led to the town whose garrison we were attempting to out-flank and with which we were now abreast. So far so good.

It was soon after this that news came back that leading vehicles were held up by an impassable nulla. Officers were despatched to find harbours for the long column that came endlessly into the area for the whole of that day, while the Brigadier went forward to investigate. Sappers were driving up and down the tree-lined nulla that impeded our progress. They were not hopeful. "It means Army Track," they said, "and even then there will be a lot of digging." Regretfully we decided that no further advance was possible that day. Troops set to work digging at the great cliffs of hard mud while lorry loads of Army Track were brought up. Scouting parties went off on foot to investigate the far bank and, later, these returned to report that it was almost impassable owing to dense masses of thorn bushes 10 to 15 feet high. So carriers were brought forward to blaze a trail and even two of the "Spiders," powerful four-wheel drive tractors which pull the guns. "They're turning us into tanks now," chuckled the gunner officer in charge. Meanwhile drivers were hard at work on maintenance of their vehicles. The gruelling country over which we had passed made a keen scrutiny necessary. Light Aid Detachments were working all-out to put damaged vehicles back on the road before the advance was resumed for we had no L. of C. behind us—there was no likelihood of the "rearward services" coming round this way.

At length the crossing was finished. With a battalion leading the way—for the enemy might be met with in force any time now—we pushed on through the scrub with only the sun or a compass to guide us. Long branches armed with fierce-hooked thorns clawed at our clothing as we forced our trucks through them or drew themselves caressingly across our throats, leaving bright red lanes to mark their passage. But it was all in the day's work and the real obstacle we knew still lay ahead. This was a sandy river bed lined with Dom palms, probably dense and possibly up to a mile in depth. Scouts came in. "No track this

way." "The palms are very thick over there," they reported. Others frankly confessed that they had lost their way. But presently a way was found, reaching the river bank at a point where the palms were thinnest. Five hundred yards of soft sand faced us, sand that would bring a wheeled vehicle to a halt in the first ten feet. Once more the head of the long column was directed into harbours while sappers went off to reconnoitre and a company of infantry plodded across the sand to secure the far bank which was within a mile or so (we reckoned) of the main road by which the enemy was withdrawing. Carriers were then ordered up and, to our relief, the caterpillar tracks made light of the powdery sand. Off we went to the far bank to investigate. Here we found that we had nearly a mile of dense palm jungle to hack our way through. It was seldom possible to see more than a few yards owing to the undergrowth and more than once we had to shout to each other in the cool silent glades to avoid being lost. For hours we paced to and fro, the Brigadier leading one party, the sappers another and the S.D.F. a third. In some places we used the carriers to hack a way through for it was of paramount importance to find a route where the palms need not be cut down as this would take many hours of work. By 1100 hours the reconnaissance was completed. Not a palm had to be cut down though we used carriers on several occasions to tow fallen trunks out of the way. When we got back to the river-bed the broad coils of wire mesh were already being unrolled and the steel ribbon was nearly half way across. The company which had pushed across the river reported that they had reached the road; no enemy in sight but there were some snipers about. By 1400 hours the column was rumbling and jolting on its way again, over the secure foothold of the Army Track and then through the unaccustomed green of the palm forest.

As the advanced guard got on to the road and turned south towards the highlands, came word that the enemy had gone 24 hours ago. We were too late! Our own troops had followed him up by a direct route and had even traversed this very road we had struggled so hard to cut.

Despite our dismay at the news it was decided to push on as far as possible that night. The greater part of the column had not yet emerged from the Dom palms and soon after it got under weigh again an unexpected halt occurred. Unable to find any reason for the delay the Brigadier went forward on foot for there was no room for vehicles to pass. Arrived at the road he com-

mandeered a truck and drove to the head of the column. To his astonishment he discovered that the advanced guard had been cut in half. The leading battalion commander had gone sailing up the road at the head of a bare company of embussed infantry, blissfully unconscious that most of his battalion and all the guns under his command were halted miles behind! No need to point the moral there.

It was now quite dark and we were forced to halt again, strung out as we were. Once more we waited for the moon and at oogo hours continued our advance. The road on which we found ourselves was built up on an embankment with a ditch on either side; it would go ill with us if the enemy air caught us in daylight for there was no means of scattering. The last vehicle got into its allotted harbour just as the sun rose.

That morning we were ordered to remain in our harbour while certain adjustments were made in the dispositions of troops to meet the divisional plan. We spent the time in studying possibilities for our further advance. Late in the afternoon the Brigadier and artillery commander went forward to have a look at the country. To our dismay news came back an hour later that they and their escort had been shot up by two enemy fighters and both the Brigadier and his senior gunner had been wounded, together with seven others. We got them back; fortunately their wounds were not severe. But it meant evacuation and the Brigade Group was left without its leader.

That evening orders came in for a renewal of the advance at first light the next morning. The next senior officer was away forward with his battalion and a liaison officer had to be sent out to find him in the dark, in unknown country. Meanwhile orders were prepared for the mechanised column to resume its thrust. Our information was that an enemy brigade was stoutly resisting others of our troops in a strong mountainous position away to the west and we were to outflank him and cut off his retreat by a route of which nothing was known than that it was "marked on the map." Late that night our new Brigade Commander arrived and took charge.

The journey started well enough but we soon found the country narrowing into a gorge which was only too reminiscent of the N. W. F. and lightly defended by the enemy. After a brisk encounter he gave us best and made off but we found he had cunningly rolled an enormous boulder on to the track at its narrowest part. It was many feet thick and required explosives

to break it up which all took time. It was some compensation to find a well in the gorge, a welcome sight in this waterless country. We pushed on through the gorge and into the open country beyond. We were now, we hoped, behind the enemy and a cordon of troops was pushed out to intercept him. To our joy we found he had not eluded us this time for a whole brigade was actually in process of withdrawal. The rest of the day we played a sort of game of hide-and-seek, the enemy breaking up into small parties which had to be chased and roped in. One officer drove over the crest of a hill in his truck and found himself confronted by the enemy brigade commander and his staff. Much to his relief—for he was alone—they decided to surrender. A battalion captured a battery of guns in action ready to fire against the direction of withdrawal, complete with mules. From all parts of the battlefield came reports of hundreds of prisoners, most of them demanding water. The whole of the next day had to be spent in mopping up (for many of the enemy had taken to the hills) and in collecting and despatching the many hundreds of prisoners. We needed some collecting ourselves after that! The enemy brigadier *was* glum when we offered him the hospitality of our mess the evening of his capture. He admitted that he had never thought we should be able to get up that way; had we not appeared so suddenly he would have held on to his strong position a good deal longer. The importance of this statement will be seen later. During our enforced halt we connected up a telephone to the excellent permanent telephone system which ran close to our headquarters. An Italian-speaking officer kept watch on the instrument and some interesting and valuable information was gained. Most of the conversations heard were between the commanders of the garrisons of two Italian towns that lay ahead of us.

But more work was to hand. This time we were to cut the road that connected the two towns I have mentioned. There was no direct road from where we were, not even a camel track. So we had to strike across country not knowing what might be in store for us in the way of obstacles. But by this time there wasn't much we were afraid to tackle in that way.

That journey was a trying one for the vehicles; the country was certainly not that for which they had been designed. Army Track again had to be used. But we reached the road that night with our leading troops and made sure that it no longer served the enemy. The remainder of our force was scattered behind us



for we had been denuded of some of our M.T. which was needed for urgent maintenance purposes and we had to resort to a combination of marching and ferrying.

Once on the road we turned towards the town on which we had been directed and the advanced guard had not gone far when it met opposition from machine-guns and pack artillery. The ensuing engagement which terminated in a four-day battle among tremendous features deserves a description to itself. It was on a full mountain warfare scale and was complicated by the fact that the enemy had blown two hundred yards of solid rock road on a steep hillside. Some ten battalions with several batteries of guns held the town we were facing but another of our brigades was approaching it by another road. The enemy were cut off from their line of retreat and were expected to put up a stiff opposition, which indeed they did. The tide of battle flowed back and forth for those four exhausting days and then, just as our pincers were about to close, the enemy decided to take a chance and bolted for the hilly, trackless country behind him. Here our mobile troops hotly pursued him and denied him any opportunity for his engineers to make a road fit for M.T.

In this engagement two brigades and a Blackshirt battalion suffered so heavily that they can no longer be considered as fighting units and in addition they lost almost every vehicle and certainly every gun and tank they had with them. Apart from this another brigade further south whose communications lay through this town and also three battalions further south still were compelled to leave their positions and make the same desperate bid to get back to their L. of C. but with the same fate. Their transport and guns were discovered later abandoned in the most impossible country. Though the enemy made attempts to provision them by air large numbers of them must have died of thirst or hunger while a great many Abyssinian levies-deserted to their own country there to take up arms against their late oppressors.

I make no apology for this somewhat breathless description of what, to us at least, was a thrilling adventure. My object in writing it is to emphasise the versatility of modern infantry. At one moment they may be practising the most up-to-date methods of frontal attack, at another they may be rushing headlong across unknown country to a far distant objective. Then they may have to turn themselves into road engineers, hewing a way through stiff masses of baked earth or cracking and pushing aside great

rocks, or cutting their way through dense undergrowth. Without warning they may be required to give up their vehicles and march with their old-time endurance. And, finally, to have to fight under full-scale mountain warfare conditions, often unexpectedly thrust upon them, for this country is full of surprises. Conditions which are gravely complicated by the fact that the enemy has masses of machine-guns and excellent pack artillery which he uses with great skill. He is an adept at selecting and preparing a defensive position among his native crags and at his best at defending it. Let there be no misconception about the fighting ability of the Eritrean Askari or the Abyssinian warrior. In the attack or defence he will often fight to the end; he has in this campaign been known to continue firing his machine-guns while a tank crushes him and his post.

In these encircling movements we travelled over 200 miles. That does not sound much on a good road but it is vastly different over the varying types of country I have described. The measurement was taken from the map and we must have done a great deal more by the speedometer. With water at a premium and rations and ammunition matters to be considered deeply, the scope of operations possible in any given circumstances was considerably limited. Few of us looked like soldiers at the end of the journey. Shirts and shorts were torn almost to the point of indecency while bearded faces were encrusted by layers of many days' dust. But the experience was one never to be forgotten and we were thankful for the hours we had spent in India on road discipline and vehicle management. And well did those vehicles repay us. Out of that long, long column only six had to be sent back as third-line repairs due to other than enemy action. We have come to regard our vehicles with something approaching the affection with which the cavalryman regarded his horse, something upon which his life might depend.

Of the lessons which we can learn the chief is, I think, the one of impetus. The Brigadier *led* his brigade group the whole way. He was seldom further back than the advanced guard and was often with the advanced guard mobile troops. The reason for this is that with a long column moving under such conditions, the delays due to waiting for information will be endless; he must be up where he can give instant decisions. He has a long, vulnerable tail and the less time he keeps it on the road the less likelihood is there of its being attacked from the air. However reliable the leading commander he is not the man to decide the

problems which will continually arise. He cannot, in justice, be expected to take grave risks on behalf of his brigade commander. It may be only a question of whether to try this route and possibly be faced with an impassable obstacle, or whether to delay while Army Track is laid on that route; it is the brigade commander who must take the decision.

Orders were practically never written in the accepted form; the brigade office seldom opened as such. Moves, harbouring, operations were carried out with a map (save the name), a message pad and liaison officers, the need for whom was never more apparent. A battalion liaison officer should be specially selected; nothing less than the best is good enough. The training is excellent and he will return to his battalion in due course twice the soldier he was.

The happy feeling of being on the move after months of stability and chasing a retreating enemy out of British territory into his own was, of course, a powerful aid in providing the impetus for such an extended move but the result was not accomplished without continual attention to vehicle maintenance often to the point of weariness during the previous months.

There has been no space in this short article to devote to such items as Mechols which proved invaluable on many occasions for small cutting-out expeditions where the more cumbersome battalion column would have been too unwieldy. Mechols, we have proved time and again, will always repay any amount of time and trouble spent on them. Nor has it been possible to dwell upon the extensive administrative arrangements necessary to prepare and maintain a column such as this. Petrol supply alone was a continual anxiety. But always it arrived; the full story of how our forces were maintained during this advance will, some day, make interesting reading.

Finally, the Brigade "Group," condemned after the last war, has proved itself again. Gunners, sappers, doctors, R.I.A.S.C., we all knew each other; we had fought together at Gallabat. We knew each other's capabilities and limitations. We were a fighting force, not a list of units. Therein lies great strength.

## DRAWING THE MORAL

BY 2ND/LIEUT. M. E. COOKE

Most of us don't "read and re-read the campaigns of the Great Captains," because most of us think the Great Captains are out of date. Most of us are wrong, but no matter about that, for we shall all agree to "read and re-read the campaigns of the Recent Captains," because in them is to be found war's judgment on our weapons and theories.

The fog of war is not seen only on the battlefield, but must needs spread its unwelcomed blanket over every form of preparatory activity. While, then, with a new car true tests are available, brakes can be screamed, wheels skidded and a cartoon of every imaginable ill-usage inflicted upon it; with a new gun or a new tank we can do the counterpart of none of these things. The only true test is war, and D.P. wars are not a practical proposition; thus when a war does come it behoves our tactical research chemist to bring out his microscope.

But tactical research is skilled business. A campaign's lessons are never so clear as is believed; since unlike an exercise wars cannot be "set" to bring out definite teaching. Only a corner of the fog is lifted and the beyond emerges only a little more clearly than before. Thus a new gun succeeds in the Spanish mountains, but would it have succeeded on the steppes of Russia? Used in tens our tank fails, but what if two thousand had struck the enemy? Our new fighter shoots down the Italians, but perhaps it will prove fruitless against the Hun. As in law it is not enough to cite the judgment; we must analyse the facts.

War, moreover, is the province of emotion, of loyalties to country, regiment, comrades and arm; loyalties which cement the military building and without which it would be so much rubble, but loyalties that are out of place in chemist or judge. Thus tactical research has been too often whimsical and hasty. Judgments have been born of heat and not of science. Let us examine some instances.

In 1870 chaos paralysed the force of France. Her armies, hard put to it to move, were in less condition to attack. So they defended, and their defence was a failure. Then out of red shame was born a theory which mocked at facts and spat at history; a theory which they christened the attack *à outrance*, and which

demanding aggression everywhere and always. The price was paid. 1914 saw history and facts take their revenge, saw defeat, but saw also defeat conceive the devil. Blind theory begat blind reaction; attack à outrance became defence à outrance; élan became concrete; bayonets faded into holes, and the whole spirit of France was fortified away.

If the event disclaims a new telling, the future must produce no third cycle. We, I believe, are too sane a nation to resume the follies of 1914 and to fling our recreated strength into fresh Balaclavas. But of the French one is less sure. When that erstwhile great nation takes the field once more, one can almost hear the spirit of Grandmaison climbing from its tomb.

So much for hot thinking; now for lazy thinking; and, as an illustration, we will choose the machine-gun. For the machine-gun is a case over which the critics have frothed. "Why," they have asked, "were the war offices so blind? Why could they not see the power of this fierce weapon? Why did they say with Haig, 'An overrated weapon'?" The answer is close at hand; they were slipshod in drawing the moral.

In 1870 the machine-gun was not the precise weapon of 1914. It stood upon a high-wheeled carriage. It was clumsy and multi-barrelled. It was worked by hand. Its effective range was a mere five hundred yards. Yet so far from being dull and cloddish, the French General Staff swallowed this defective weapon with gusto. It was manufactured in great numbers. Crews were trained in elaborate confidence. The artillery gave it place. The Parisian press loaded its columns with "Our Wonder Weapon." It was the secret of France, the secret that was to sweep von Moltke out of fame. And it failed; utterly, miserably, it failed. So, when 34 years later, Germany again invaded France, when the machine-gun was destined within twelve months to pile more skulls than Ghenghiz Khan, it stood discredited.

Yet the mistake was not excusable. The *mitrailleuse* failed because it was deemed artillery. It sprayed bullets and was used with guns. It ranged in hundreds and was placed against those which ranged in thousands. A surprise weapon, it was linked with a mass weapon. A front-line ambush, it was placed with the supports. The *mitrailleuse* failed because it was abused; its lessons failed because research was abused. As soldiers we have paid too much attention to results; what matters is that which causes the results.



In proof of this last fact the tank stands our good friend; for had the military mind kept its pre-war content, had Crimean tactics still appeared as perfection's acme, then the history of the tank—had it been allowed to have a history—would have been written somewhat as follows: "At the Somme it broke down; at Passchendaele it sank; in a score of battles its success was not spectacular; at Cambrai what it had gained, unaided infantry rewon; never, even on August 8th, did it attain a penetration equal to that of Ludendorff's weapon."

Now the fact that the tank was not so written was due to Ypres, and Loos, and Arras, and the Somme, and Passchendaele. Those ghastly butcheries forbade complacency. They vetoed content. They compelled thought. So what was seen was not the tank's failure but the causes of that failure, with the result that measures for removing those causes were continually tried until success came so near that the 1919 campaign was to have been a tank campaign.

The tank made history in more senses than one. Unlike the machine-gun it was not a civilian invention which soldiers had adopted; nor like the aeroplane a civilian machine they had transformed; but a soldier's answer to a soldier's problem. The machine-gun grew from a weapon which required a use, the tank from a need which required a weapon. Thus while so often invention has been the seed of tactics, here tactics had become the seed of invention. Invention, too, obeys the rule of thought. We are not to wait for the new, but to seek in our limitations the parentage of the new.

But if the tank was born of the Somme it has long since left home. That which was adduced as an aid to the other arms, now threatens to turn cuckoo and hurl them from the nest or, more literally, to force them to conform to its own needs. It was the great pre-war problem of land warfare—was the tank or were infantry the master weapon? Abyssinia shed little light, for though tanks were used the conditions were too peculiar, the scale too small, the enemy too ill-equipped. Events in Spain also shed little light. The tank was no marked success; but was this due to the weapon itself, or to its handling, numbers or design? The Germans made one judgment, the French another. It was catastrophic for the French.

There followed the Polish and Finnish campaigns with opposite apparent lessons. In the first mechanised force swept forward, in the second it gained tardy and expensive success. What

was the moral? France backed the Finns. "Like us," they said, "they had a Maginot Line." It was catastrophic for France.

But if war experience has been as often misleading as helpful the fault has been largely our own. Preconceptions and hot verdicts bespeak their own fate. The Germans bent on avoiding a second error ("there must be no mistakes this time") left no cobwebs in their search; the Allies, full-fed with victory, brushed whimsically. Not for them the full report; they were satisfied with headlines. Yet in research as in the field none can throw away the will to victory and live.

Failure is not inevitable. Tanks in the last war, German achievements in this prove the fact. And we, too, are not without our successes. The anti-tank gun has required few amendments either in design or tactics; and the carrier, that untried weapon, has emerged triumphant. The task of the tactical research chemist is not insuperable, but the old ways of carefree judgments will not do. Trained minds must tackle this problem, specialist minds with both the background and the leisure, and minds helped by full, and, where needed, expensive equipment. Economy in thought rarely proves economy in battle, for mistakes are the dearest teachers the world can know.

Now with our method clear let us glance at modern problems; not that we might solve them—for that we have neither space, judgment, nor knowledge—but that we may discern a few of the traps yawning for the unwary. Unfortunately in the flurry of preparation they are likely to receive a compromise answer, yet if they are not solved quickly, titanic efforts must be wasted, while if they are not solved rightly they may bring us close to the dread retribution of a Nazi triumph. Tactical thought has so great a responsibility to-day.

The first problem is the form of a modern army, and here at once an old fallacy tempts us. We must not think that, because the Germans are in Paris, all that they have done is truth, nor because the French are at Vichy, they have wrought nothing but the tactical lie. We know now that Sedan and Gravelotte were appalling in their misconception of modern weapons, yet victory sublimated them. Only half a century later were reaped in the Flanders' trenches the bloody fruits of error. Viewed from the absolute German tactics were far from faultless.

It is a fact which requires little study to ascertain that the decisive element in German success was the combination of mechanised troops with air support. Yet if we study the composition of the German army we find but 13 armoured, seven

motorised and three airborne divisions—a total of 23 modern—compared with 160 conventional divisions. Thus seven-eighths of the German army had no other function than that of providing the screen, the guard and the police for the mechanised troops.

Was this economy of force? Is there any parallel in history for it? It is like tacking to the hoplites of Xenophon the hordes of Cyrus. Granted they fulfilled a function. So do men pushing a broken lorry. But they are not efficient. Moreover, it was these "followers" who sustained the enormous casualties. "When they did advance it was like slaughtering cattle," was one report; and, while in the bright flush of conquest, such sacrifices are lightly made, to-morrow, when victory is still far off and the war still exacts its increasing toll, the old wounds will reopen. Napoleon learned long ago that the blood tax will not be paid for ever.

Compared with the German triumph the Western Desert victory seems far more perfect. Here infantry had a proper function, their numbers were not just factual but bore a logical proportion to their task. There was no futile mass of footsloggers to tax the supply system and swell the casualties. It was not weakness of opposition alone which made the cost of victory so light. Here, then, is what research should examine—What proportion of infantry do we require, armed for what duties? Is not the day of the P.B.I. over?

But clearly examination of France and Libya is not merely inadequate but may be actively misleading, for the war going on will bring new theatres, and it is to these that the new army must be suited. Napoleon made the like mistake when he attempted in Spain and Russia what had brought success in Italy and Central Europe. In defence of an island tanks may play a lesser part; perhaps in the Balkans, or Spain, or Norway, we shall need a mountain infantry. These, too, are problems of research, and here its decisiveness rears stark naked. Our reverse in Norway had one single cause. We had not thought; the Germans had.

But it is the air which is the vital question, for in the air lies the possibility of decision. But concerning the air our danger is to deem our experience greater than it is. Just as on the Continent the Luftwaffe served as auxiliary to the advancing tanks, so against Britain it has been crippled. London's experience has not shown that morale can defy the air, for the quality of the R.A.F. has saved it the test. If to-day London stands with British firmness against the raiders, our admiration must not blind us to facts. A German mastery of the skies was not achieved and, therefore, perhaps the real test of air power is yet to come.

But it should not be on the German side, for a turning of the tables is all but inevitable. Technical superiority is ours. Moral superiority is ours. Only numbers remain, and in the swelling of factories in our homeland, and in the stream that must rise to a mighty current athwart the Atlantic, the numbers will come. So the Luftwaffe's failure shall be our success, and the R.A.F. will not hurry in ones and twos by darkness to their targets, but in broad, full daylight will strike in thousands. Will Germany stand that strain? Will she bear pain to which she can see no end? For it is the hope of victory which gives courage and, for Germany, superiority once lost is lost for ever. When hope is gone, surrender already hammers upon the door.

But dogmatism is not our purpose. The above are questions, not facts. It is research that is needed, deep research, which shall form the base of the decisions which in turn shall direct Imperial effort. When Clausewitz wrote, "Plainly the activity engaged in these appliances (arming and equipping) is a different thing from the fight itself; it is only preparation for the combat, not the conduct of the same," he was thinking of a warfare whose technique was relatively static. To-day arming and equipping may be half the battle, for in the whirl of tactical revolution and in the infinitude of weapons, a country may lose its balance, grasp at the wrong rails, and tumble helpless into the abyss.

Generalship on the field is not enough. To-day the general, like the modern artist, must devise his technique, and if his technique be bad it will try his art to the utmost. Give him the wrong army, the wrong training, the wrong weapon and not Napoleon himself shall escape the wreck. Thus a need becomes clear, for just as in the field the general can decide nothing but upon information, and just as that information comes from his intelligence staff, so the authorities to whom these questions are to be submitted need information, and that information also can only come from an organised staff.

## AN OPEN LETTER TO THE YOUNG SQUADRON AND COMPANY COMMANDER

By JOHN HELLAND

Since you have only recently taken command of your squadron or company and are naturally probably feeling a little diffident about your tactical knowledge and your ability to beat an enemy in battle, especially one who has already seen some fighting and who may be an older soldier than you are, you will be glad of some guidance and advice to make fighting look a bit more familiar to you and from that to give you encouragement and confidence. These notes are written for you from the actual experience in war of older officers, but do not think that because they are older they are necessarily deadbeats.

First of all, it is just as well to face squarely the fact that the German officer opposite you may be better drilled to battle but certainly lacks two big advantages that you possess. The first is that he lacks the cause for which you and your men fight, so he will not display the determination in battle that you and your men will display. Your second advantage is that you have played games for a great part of your life: he has never played games—nor have his men. Because of this you and your side are used to studying an opponent, seeing where his weak spots and strong spots are, and making up your method of play, your tactics, and your plan accordingly so that you may beat him. He has not had all this experience and will find it a slower process to devise his plans to surprise you. Next, since these Germans are not game players, they cannot really play all out for their side once their first fanatical zeal has worn off. It is one thing to parade about Berlin in fine uniforms and to pose and posture as a thing of admiration for children and girls and to shout vain and defiant pagan cries: it is another to fight on when it seems impossible to beat a staunch enemy or when one is driven against the ropes and the sponge and surrender seem the only alternative to being knocked out. German morale will not stand up to a hammering when there is only a glimmer of a hope of success unless their men are *en masse*. That is the usual characteristic of the fanatic. It is mass fervour that takes them into battle and this soon burns itself out in the individual. This is not so with us: we are more steadfast as we now see from the staunch courage of our people



in England, men, women and children, and from the determined conduct and bearing of our Indian soldiers in Eritrea. So you see that you start with a great deal in your favour before you meet the German on the battlefield. As a keen games player, you will press these advantages.

Most of us, some time in our lives, have been bitten by one team game or other and we have sat down and studied it and have talked it over carefully with our team and have built up a technique of our own, a method of play a little different from the methods of other teams. And we have kept our methods strictly secret: the more unorthodox they were, the more secret we kept them. We changed our methods a bit from time to time so that other teams would not come to know them and so be ready to counter them.

Whenever we were about to play off a match against another team, we set to work and found out all we possibly could about that other team, even down to the type of boots they wore if it was a foot game. We went further than that, for if we got a chance we went and watched our future opponents playing a game and spotted their technique and their tactics and then devised means of upsetting both. We also looked for and watched their strong and weak players and we arranged to mark (or hold) the strong ones with those of our players who were good "spoilers" and to attack and rattle the weak ones with other players suitable for this role.

In fact, we were very intelligent and very thorough in the way we got our team trained as a whole for, say, football: and equally thorough in training them and planning their tactics to meet and beat any given opponent.

Now we have never been anywhere near as thorough in training and preparing ourselves for fighting. However, let us put that behind us and look to the present and to the future. We are going to meet the German in the game of fighting and we are going to beat him. Sometimes we will have more and better weapons: sometimes he will have more and better weapons. But whatever the situation may be, we must use the two advantages we have already spoken of—his low morale and his lack of games sense and team spirit.

That is, we must firstly try to depress his morale by continuously damaging him till he gets the "jitters" or gets fed up, or realises at last that he is not as clever a soldier as you or me. When he realises that, it will be a great shock to him for he be-

lieves that, of all things, he is at any rate good at soldiering. He's been brought up on that idea so show him it's wrong and he's got little left to fall back upon. It means that you and your men must always be more self-reliant and have more initiative than he has. Keep him on the hop.

And, secondly, we must use our better knowledge and experience of how to get a team ready to beat an opponent. What did we do in order to prepare our team for the game? What will we do to prepare our team, our squadron or company, for fighting?

1. *Football*.—We started off with the general and usual training for the game much in the same way as anyone else; for basically, the training is roughly the same for all teams taking part in the game.

*Fighting*.—We leaders learn our business at various schools and we study the training pamphlets and memoranda. We first train ourselves till we know we can impart the usual instruction to those under us and we thus give them the general, the basic, training which the German officer is giving his men. Perhaps ours is a little better: we hope it is and we must try and make it so.

2. *Football*.—After this, we study carefully the attributes of our men: which man has a good, strong, left leg: which can kick hard with both legs: which are fast and which slow. We then get them into their proper positions on the field. In other words, we are studying the nature of the weapons at our disposal and their characteristics.

*Fighting*.—The first part of this is done for us because we are given the weapons: they are put into our hands. We examine the weapons carefully, we get to know them, we study their characteristics so that we know how to get the best use out of them and in what place in the team to put them.

3. *Football*.—Now we practise all our men individually, giving all the same basic training, learning to kick, to run, to mark, to take their place on the field, etc.

*Fighting*.—We give our squadron or company their basic individual training, teaching all to shoot a rifle, to march, to take up their place in the section formation, etc.

4. *Football*.—And now we put them together on the field of play and teach them to combine, to play collectively, to work together, each in his usual place, all playing to a code known to all and playing under us—their captains. And we go on and on at it till they and we go like clockwork.

*Fighting*.—Next, we get the sections together and then the platoons and, lastly, our squadron or company, and we put them through constant practice on the ground under ourselves, the captain, until we see them all playing in together, combining perfectly; until our battle procedure is perfect and they and we go like clockwork.

5. *Football*.—And now we are ready to take off our coat, roll up our sleeves, and try ourselves out against an opponent. We will start with a “friendly” so that our chaps don’t lose confidence at the outset. We “cut our teeth” on these opponents, and we go on with these “friendlies” till we are ready to enter for the district, company or squadron shield.

*Fighting*.—Now we look round the battalion or the regiment for another company or squadron to fight. We go to the C. O. and ask him to set an exercise so that our opponent and ourselves can have at each other. We want to “cut our teeth” on that opponent. We do so and we go on and on fighting our friends with blank in harmless battles. We “cut our teeth” on them.

6. *Football*.—And now we come to business. We are ready for the district shield and we are to play “A” Company of the Bunwarries. They are playing a practice game on Saturday against their “B” Company. Let’s go and have a look at them. We go with one or two selected sleuths of ours—no more or we’ll excite suspicion, and we mix with the crowd and we watch and we come back and report. Then we make up our plans to wallop that “A” Company.

We go on to the field the following Saturday and before he knows where he is he finds his best men being “spoilt” and marked and bit by bit he is mastered and we are on the offensive, surprising him and banging the ball into the net.

*Fighting.*—And now we're ready for war so we study carefully, from every source that the adjutant can find for us, all about our German enemy and his tactics and where it hurts him most to be hit.

We sail overseas and soon we have a real German in front of us. We have studied him from our War Information Circulars and from everything the adjutant could find for us.

We want now to know a good deal more about him, so we do it by sending out our sleuths—our patrols—to study him stealthily, to find out how he lives, what he does, whether he is windy when patrols shoot him up—in fact, we want to know all his ways, habits, morale and weapons so that we can get our methods of play settled when we finally decide to play a match against him or if he tries to play one against us. But we keep our methods and our dispositions secret for he must not know what we are going to do to him, and how we are going to do it, till we actually do it.

Football and fighting are not so very different; only there are practically no rules to the latter—it is just a ruthless game. As such, it is worth far more application of our time and our energy than is the game of football or any other game. The idle and the escapists of our profession have branded as “shop” all intelligent talk out of hours of the theory and practice of training and of war. They should be quietly smothered for the harm they do.

It was Jorrocks who said of hunting, “‘Unting is the sport of kings, the image of war without its guilt and only five and twenty per cent. of its danger.”

So is football and so is hockey, though kings may not play them.

## OLD ARMY RECRUITING POSTERS

By J. PAINE

Recruiting for the Regular Army has always proved something of a problem for the military authorities, and in the none-too-easy task of obtaining the right material recruiting posters have played a very important part. In the posters displayed outside taverns over a century ago the wording often left a good deal to be desired and the message conveyed usually struck the bombastic note. In those so-called good old times recruits invariably took the oath at a public house named in the poster. Here is an example: "Fourth Regiment of Foot, or King's Own. His Majesty having beene graciously pleased to order a Second Battalion to his own Regiment, there is no doubt our young heroes will lose no time to show their affection for our beloved Sovereign, by immediately applying at the Coach and Horses, King Street, Westminster, where they will be received and paid the Royal Bounty agreeable to the order of our brave Commander-in-Chief." This particular poster was circulated in 1804 by the regiment now known as the King's Own Royal Regiment (Lancaster). The second battalion mentioned therein was disbanded in the year of Waterloo.

The fear of invasion by Napoleon and the renewal of hostilities in 1803 was the signal to several other regiments to raise second battalions. Among the regiments reviewed by the Duke of York at a camp near Eastbourne on the 27th of August, 1804, was the 8th Foot, now the 1st Battalion, The King's Regiment (Liverpool). Four months later, after extensive recruiting in the West Riding of Yorkshire, that regiment found itself the proud possessor of a second battalion. The usual poster was duly exhibited and this is how it was worded, "160 guineas Bounty will be paid to 10 young men of good character who will come forward to complete Captain Smith's Company in that respectable Corps the VIII, or King's Regiment of Infantry, laying at Eastbourne in Sussex. Now my lads is your opportunity. The King's Regiment are to have an augmentation of a second battalion, which will want upwards of 100 non-commissioned officers. Lose no time in applying any day this week, to Captain Smith at 24, Greenfield Street, near Whitechapel, or Sergeant Johnson of the above Regiment at 54, Whitechapel Road, near the church, where every encouragement will be given." The poster terminated



with the information that bringers of good recruits would be liberally rewarded and that Germans would be accepted, provided they could speak English. The substantial bounty promised, even if not always given, is strangely at contrast with the Queen's shilling handed on enlistment to recruits of a later era.

The poster just alluded to is an interesting document in the history of a battalion whose career was of short duration. After five years' soldiering on both sides of the Tweed, its flank companies embarked for Holland on an abortive expedition. The year 1810 found the battalion at Jersey, from where six companies left in the same year for Nova Scotia, where they were stationed for four years. Then followed their long and arduous march of several hundred miles in snow-shoes to the great lakes; the crossing of the frontier; and their part in the unsuccessful attack on the American town of Plattsburg. The battalion was disbanded in 1815 and forty-three years elapsed before The King's had another second battalion.

Of interest in the recruiting annals of The Royal Marines is an advertisement which appeared during the American War of Independence, 1776—83. It was published on the 26th of February, 1780, in the now defunct *Ipswich Journal*, a newspaper which had a wide circulation in Suffolk and Essex. Twenty recruits under the age of forty were asked for to complete a company of the First Division of Marines, the sergeant's headquarters being the "Marlborough's Head" at Colchester. After the information that applicants would "make their fortune by capture from the enemy," this advertisement sets out the advantages of service in the following manner: "Marine soldiers have every advantage of His Majesty's royal bounty; excellent clothing, arms and accoutrements, with the addition of provisions found them *gratis* when on board ship, besides their full pay; and when in service, they share in prize-money equal with able seamen; these are advantages well known, and can be testified by many in this country, who have made their fortunes in the last, but more particularly in the present war." The Marines at this time were without the title "Royal," that much-prized designation not being granted till 1802.

A poster circulated in 1756 by the "52nd Regiment, commanded by Major-General Abercrombie," concluded with these words, "All such persons who have their country's interest at heart, and are ready to exert themselves in defence of their religion and liberties, are desired to apply to the Earl of Sandwich at Huntingdon, where they will meet with proper encouragement, and, in his

absence, to Major D'Ebrisay, of the said regiment, at his quarters at the Crown Inn at Huntingdon." In 1895 a transcription of this poster was erroneously included in "The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry Chronicle," the regimental annual of the old 43rd and 52nd Regiments. But the latter regiment at the time of the circulation of this poster was numbered as the 54th and was not renumbered as the 52nd till the year following that in which the poster appeared. This juggling with regimental numbers was brought about by the disbandment of two regiments. The regiment named in the poster was raised in December, 1755, as the 52nd Foot, the recruiting rendezvous being at Norwich. A Royal Warrant was issued in the following month authorizing Colonel James Abercrombie "By beat of drum or otherwise, to raise men in any county, or part of our kingdom of Great Britain, for this Regiment of Foot." In 1757 the regiment was renumbered and became the 50th Foot, the lineal ancestor of the present First Battalion, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment.

In a somewhat lengthy recruiting poster issued on behalf of the present 2nd Battalion, The Welch Regiment in 1811, when it was the 69th Foot, the then recent achievements of the regiment at Mauritius and Java are praised in glowing language. The certainty of accumulating untold prize money in future military operations was, of course, impressed upon the would-be recruit who perused this particular poster and who, reading on, would have read these words, "Such, my fine fellows, are the advantages of a soldier's life, independent of the honour of serving the King, whose indescribable virtues render him an inestimable blessing to the country. Besides all these advantages, young men and lads shall receive a bounty of sixteen guineas for volunteering into this fine regiment, and may make application to me, Lieutenant G. James, at my quarters, next door to the George Inn, High Street, or to either of my sergeants, at my rendezvous, the Flying Horse, Watergate. An early application by young men of any education will ensure immediate promotion."

From the foregoing posters one sees how the Government obtained its infantrymen in the grand old hand-to-hand fighting days. Other branches of the Service were kept up to strength in the same manner and, by way of conclusion, an extract will be given from a recruiting poster launched by the 16th Light Dragoons at the time of the regiment's formation in 1759. This is how it ran: "You will be mounted on the finest horses in the

world, with superb clothing and the richest accoutrements. Your pay and privileges are equal to two guineas a week, you are everywhere respected, your society is courted, you are admired by the fair which, together with the chance of getting switched by a buxom widow or of brushing with a rich heiress, renders the situation truly enviable and desirable. Young men out of employment or uncomfortable—"There is a tide in the affairs of men which taken at the flood leads on to fortune," nick it instantly and enlist."

Who wouldn't join the cavalry after reading that? The regiment for whose benefit this alluring poster was printed in due course became the 16th The Queen's Lancers, a title it retained till 1922, when, on its amalgamation with the 5th Royal Irish Lancers, it became the 16/5th Lancers. The 16th had more battle honours on its drum banners than any other cavalry regiment in the Service and it was the only Lancer regiment to sport the scarlet tunic. One of its recruits in 1877 was Trooper William Robertson, who forty-three years later found himself a Field-Marshal and a Baronet.

Another recruiting poster circulated as an inducement to men to enlist in a regiment of the mounted branch is that of the Midlothian Light Dragoons, dated 1798, which, like the previously mentioned poster of the 16th Light Dragoons, was not included in the present writer's discussion on "Old Cavalry Recruiting Posters" published in the January 1937 issue of *The Cavalry Journal*. The poster of these Midlothian cavalrymen was displayed in the streets of Edinburgh and contained the following extraordinary paragraph: "The Regiment has been one year and a half in Ireland, constantly employed in exterminating the Croppies, who are now—damn their bloods—about finished. So much so that these gallant light dragoons are at present eating their beef, bread and potatoes (which by the way are not got for nothing) in peace and comfort, in one of the most delightful, plentiful and cheapest counties in Ireland." The "Croppies" were the Irish rebels of the period. As a sign of sympathy with the French revolution, they were in the habit of having their hair cropped short. The poster continued in the following fashion: "This is not the place (for want of room) to talk of honours acquired by the regiment; suffice it to say they have received the thanks of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, of the Parliament of Ireland, for their spirited conduct, and are now entitled to wear the Royal Colour, on which account their clothing has been changed from red to blue."

From the concluding paragraph of this recruiting bill one learns that the regiment was "so famous in performing the sword-and-carbine exercises on horse-back, that the very name of Midlothian has been known to strike terror into the hearts of the Rebels." The poster then winds up with the following rather gruesome details: "At the battle of Hacketstown one of the Dragoons at full speed, with a single blow of the sabre, cut the head of a rebel clean off, and at the battles of Ross and Vinegar Hill, two of the rebel leaders were shot by the Midlothian Marksman." The magic words, "God Save the King," terminated this remarkable recruiting notice. The Midlothian Light Dragoons had been raised as a Fencible unit in 1794 and with the rest of the Fencible Cavalry was disbanded in 1800. Fencibles comprised cavalry and infantry and were regular regiments liable for home defence only. They were maintained for the duration of a war and were not liable to drafting.

So much for the recruiting posters launched on behalf of infantry and cavalry regiments in the days when war was a chivalrous undertaking and the business was done by professional soldiers in all the glory of full dress. The remaining arm, the artillery, are deserving of mention too, since a poster printed for their special benefit ninety-three years ago is one of the longest and most informative ever issued. The rendezvous of the recruiting sergeant of the Royal Artillery on this occasion was at a tavern in Taunton. The poster stipulated that apprentices would not be accepted and that applicants must not be married. The poster continued in these words: "They must measure 5 feet 8 inches in height and be between eighteen and twenty-two years of age. Growing lads not more than seventeen may be admitted. They will receive the same liberal bounty of £5-15-6. On their arrival at Head Quarters they will be taught the art of riding, driving, fencing, gunnery and the mechanics. The making and use of gunpowder, sky rockets, and other fireworks, and by the power of a lever to move a 42-pounder battering gun with the same facility as a penny whistle. The cannon used in the field are called FLYING ARTILLERY from the astonishing rapidity of their movements. The Gunners (for so Artillerymen are styled) wear a SPLENDID UNIFORM and are well mounted on taking the Field." All of which goes to show what artillerymen were expected to master in the "roaring forties."

From the real soldiering side of the profession one passes straight on to the distinctly lighter side as expressed in the same poster: "They are lodged in the finest barracks in the world.



They have light work and good pay, the best Beef that Kent can afford, and a comfortable place in the barracks called 'The Canteen' set apart for them to see their friends in and take a cheerful glass; also a splendid library and reading room; a park and pleasure grounds, with a select number of horses for their instruction and amusement. After their 'Education' is completed they will have an opportunity afforded them to travel to foreign countries, where they may drink their wine at two-pence per bottle by the new tariff!! If well conducted they will be promoted to **NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS**, from whom the Quartermasters are selected who are the best paid in the army, and return to see their friends with money, manners, and experience!!"

This recruiting poster is indeed an interesting and historic document in the annals of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, even if the picture is somewhat overpainted. The poster concludes with a list of the daily rates of pay of quartermasters and the various non-commissioned grades down to those of lower status such as gunners, drivers, collar-makers, wheelers, etc. The pay in all branches of the service is, of course, higher to-day, food and accommodation are better and the life generally has improved in every way. But the soldier no longer gets his wine at "two-pence per bottle by the new tariff."



## THOUGHTS ON PROPAGANDA

BY MAJOR THE HON'BLE C. B. BIRDWOOD, M.V.O.

In a previous article in April, 1938,\* a writer in this magazine subjected the technique of propaganda to scientific and lucid analysis; and it is not here intended to go over the ground which was then covered. It is, alas, late in the day to start tabulating the subject according to a text-book layout and I have, therefore, sought only to record a few thoughts on the application of propaganda in the war.

In the first week of September, 1939, some 40,000,000 pamphlets were dropped on North-West Germany, a line of attack which perplexed many members of the fighting forces and came in for no little comment throughout the country. Was such criticism justified and is the power of the pen to be dismissed merely as a matter of the weight of words in contrast to bombs?

The effect of a bomb can be seen and accurately recorded while the effect of a leaflet is intangible. Yet because that effect cannot be seen, it is hardly logical to deny its existence. In many other spheres we believe what we cannot see and faith in the power of the leaflet is but an extension of a sense of warfare to appreciate the unseen, in a manner which has been understood by the scientists and psychologists for many years.

But the leaflet needs to be used with discrimination. Just as a commander likes to hit his enemy in his weakest link and exploit success, so should a leaflet be dropped on soil with promise of fertility.

In its practical application, this would connote that bombs must for a long time be far more effective over Berlin than paper, while paper will always be effective over Vienna, Prague and Warsaw.

The study of the psychology of the enemy has of late years been frequently stressed in all our teaching. The correct use of the leaflet, or indeed any form of propaganda, is but the extension of that study in its general application to the whole population of the enemy countries.

A knowledge of psychology is then the essence of good propaganda. Thus, it would surely be useless at the present juncture to drop caricatures of Hitler, as Charlie Chaplin sees him in "The Great Dictator," over Germany. Similar pictures of Mussolini

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\* "Propaganda," by Lieut.-Colonel H. L. F. Dimmock, O.B.E.

in Italy might have some effect. But from the point of view of propaganda, pamphlets ridiculing Mussolini dropped in Germany, or exposing Hitler in Italy as responsible for her sorry plight, would be far more profitable.

It is natural that propaganda based on truth must ultimately have a greater chance of success than that based on opportunism. If, as we believe, our cause is right, the whole of our propaganda assumes a background which the enemy cannot enjoy. His is the task to be continually thinking out verbal expedients and justification for fresh plans of aggression. He must adjust his propaganda to his own changing strategic conception. With us, the background of our propaganda is secure and later we can afford to develop our strategy in the safe knowledge that whatever we may tell the enemy is founded on the rock of the simple justice of our cause. Were it otherwise, we should not be fighting.

Subject to the above principle, our propaganda technique would seem to leave room for much development and imagination. It is not enough to say "We are right. Therefore we shall win." The impression the layman receives is that there is a redundant amount of propaganda wasted in developing our own morale and not enough spent in attacking the enemy. Great Britain is united and needs little medicine from the microphone. The major portion of our broadcasting machinery should be concentrated on getting our propaganda across to the continent of Europe.

Propaganda for enemy consumption may take two forms. It may (a) place our own case before the enemy, or (b) attack the weak points in enemy propaganda. While Mr. Churchill has stressed that it is early days to start defining war aims, we cannot go wrong if we continually confirm that our cause is the freedom of all countries under domination. There is no need to go into detail of either minority or boundary. The principle is sufficient.

It is perhaps here appropriate to touch on the question as to whether we are to regard our war effort as concentrated against two nations or two parties. In the case of Italy, the issue is clear. We know that a great proportion of the nation is ready to welcome a collapse of the Fascist rule. In the case of Germany, one frequently hears heated discussion on such lines. But ignoring all ethical considerations, from the propagandist point of view there can only be one answer. By stressing either in the press or in public speech that we are fighting to conquer a nation of eighty

million villains, we are playing into the hands of the enemy. These are the very words which the German minister of propaganda wishes to hear. With such material at their disposal, the Nazi party can shelter behind their nation indefinitely. They have but to tell the people that the enemy has declared that Germany is fighting for its existence and they, the leaders, will retain their power behind the armed forces for years to come. Our object must surely be to drive a wedge in between the people and their leaders, so that the latter may be the first rather than the last to fall. It is good propaganda which fosters this object and conversely poor propaganda which tends to push Germany further into the power of its leaders.

In considering the second aspect, that of our attack on the weak points of enemy propaganda, a factor of great importance is that retort must be immediate and complete. Too often it seems that the Führer is allowed to get away with a naked lie; and the verbal gymnastics of Goebbels are so surprising as to warrant our contempt rather than our denial. Yet the wildest statements are drunk in by the German public and, as such, should be vigorously and immediately challenged.

In illustration, Hitler has repeatedly made capital of the theme of "Lebensraum." It has been the German people's fate, he tells them, to suffer for years a stifling confinement within the boundaries dictated by the Capitalist powers. So far as the writer is aware, there has never yet been a serious effort from our side, to tell the German people that a glance at any book of pre-war European statistics would show that both England and Belgium suffer a far greater concentration of population per square mile than Germany. At the beginning of the year Mr. Churchill made a brilliant appeal to the Italian Nation. The speech was seized upon by the Fascist press and reissued to Italians in a completely unrecognizable form. Here was surely a case for swift and determined action. Leaflets, many thousands of them, with the true text of the speech, could effectively have been dropped. Apart from the incontrovertible argument of Mr. Churchill's attack, the fact that the Fascist party were, on the evidence before their people, completely altering the text of an appeal, could only have reacted to the great discomfiture of the party.

Another aspect of the propaganda technique is the treatment of prisoners. Loose comment on the lines of "Charity begins at home" is frequent. Those who would see prisoners in comfort are regarded as sentimentalists. Such an attitude fails to trace the

result of action to its logical conclusion: again it believes only that which it can see.

If Italian prisoners receive macaroni (I am unaware if they do or not), sooner or later the people in Italy know, a factor of definite propaganda value and calculated to undermine enemy resistance in a manner which, though subtler and less direct than the tactical success, is nevertheless real in its more indirect method.

It may not at first be apparent as to how the application of propaganda interests the military command. At the most it would seem but a matter for co-operation between the Ministry of Information and the Royal Air Force with occasional reference to the War Cabinet.

In all the training manuals and in the many war training pamphlets issued, I have been unable to find a reference to the direct use of propaganda.

And yet a moment's reflection will bring to mind many an occasion calling for its resourceful application by a Commander.

We may consider an imaginary situation. An Empire, Saxonia, is at war with two great powers, Nordania and Romania. At heart these two have little in common, their liaison being only one of expediency. Nordania we may suppose to be Saxonia's real enemy whom she keeps at arm's length while she concentrates her main effort on land to defeat the weaker Romania. We see at first the gradual investment of Romania's colonial Empire. Attached to the Saxonian General Staff and as an integral part of their intelligence is the propaganda branch, with their powerful transmitters ready. They have managed to engage the services of Romanians hostile to the present regime; for, alas, they have too few of their own officers trained in the Romanian language! Their machinery is complete. They can jam the broadcasts from the Romanian Capital across the water and replace them with their own story of the war. The pamphlet section is ready to supplement the microphone. Finally Saxonia effects a landing on Romanian soil. Saxonian mobile armoured forces are sweeping across the Romanian countryside. The Propaganda Branch have made straight for the broadcasting stations and the newspaper offices. They have shown, too, that they are not devoid of imagination; for fluttering from every Saxonian vehicle as it rattles through the Romanian villages are little cloth Saxonian and Romanian flags flying side by side on the same staff. Many of these are thrown to the silent peasants who gather in frightened indecision at the street corners. Further ahead, Saxonia's planes

are circling over the Romanian cities and behind them message pennons flutter bravely out in the manner in which we are bidden to read *The Daily Chronicle* on Derby Day or at the Cup Final. To-day, however, it is to tell the people of Romania that further resistance is useless, that the Saxonian forces are here, there and everywhere; and that, above all, they will free the Romanians from the foul insidious exploitation they have suffered at the hands of that other enemy, Nordania! The Romanians are rather shy at first. They recall orders threatening imprisonment for reading pamphlets. Still they can hardly fail to read a message towed across the sky in front of them and a man cannot be sent to prison for looking at an aeroplane.

Such is the picture. But it needs enthusiasm and not a little imagination from the commander and his staff.

There is yet one more aspect of this complex business which needs to be considered. It has been stressed that the background of our propaganda to-day rests on truth. To what extent is departure from the truth justified in its daily application through the various media of propaganda? In the story above, would the Saxonian Commander broadcast to the people that his forces had reached the Romanian Capital and captured the power station and the water works when in fact they had done nothing of the sort? The answer seems to be that if a deliberate lie is told and later discovered before the capitulation of the enemy, the whole effect of subsequent propaganda becomes innocuous. In contrast the magnification of a small truth out of proportion to its real value will frequently have far-reaching repercussions.

There is a subtle difference between a clumsy lie and the creation of a false situation to deceive the enemy. Thus to publish that General Y had flown from A to B to consult with General X when in fact he had flown from A to C to take over a secret force in the process of formation is but the kind of ruse which comes within the normal sphere of the Intelligence Branch and is hardly a matter of propaganda.

A vast subject has here been treated lightly. The intention has been only to overcome indifference. As a nation we are shy of methods with a flavour of the melodramatic. Yet we can hardly afford to neglect any agency which will assist us to victory in the days to come.



## "NORPERFORCE"

BY JOHN HELLAND

There is many a tale, true and false, that is told of "Norperforce," that body of British and Indian troops who spent three years in North West Persia and only pulled out of it for home and rest in the summer of 1921. Comedy comes most easily to mind.

Surra, that dreaded disease, broke out among the local camels. It was hard to control, for the Persian preferred to work his animal till it dropped rather than to kill it. He was something like the Indian in that way.

The transport people were finally compelled to offer a reward for each camel tail brought in. This led to the desired result and evidence of the willingness of the people to destroy infected animals came in wholesale with the growing tale of tails. But this great slaughter had no effect on the epidemic. It still raged.

Efforts were redoubled, rewards increased and the tally grew.

Finally, there came a shortage of camels to carry commissariat loads, so hiring prices were raised. This, in turn, led to a surprising diminution in the intake of tails. The shortage of load carriers grew worse: demand sent prices still higher.

The atmosphere became tense with speculation as the tussle between demand and supply raged furiously on.

Bursting point came when a herd of camels was driven in by some innocent from a far place to pick up a big load of rice for a battalion many miles away. As they filed off into the desert, it was seen that not one owned a complete tail.

\* \* \* \*

Some things made one a little bashful.

One remembers a Russian lady of fairly ample figure, with her baby, coming into a *sarai*\* where a Gurkha subaltern and his orderly were staying for a few days when on a reconnaissance into the hills. The officer asked her if she would like some lunch and she readily accepted.

His orderly went out to tell the cook to pour some more hot water in the soup and to mince the chicken leg instead of serving it whole.

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\* Inn.

The *sarai* table was rough and rather high. The visitor sat chatting away for a bit in broken English, then opened her bodice and laid her copious breasts upon the table to give her infant a more stable firing platform from which to operate.

Her child's meal over, she put him aside and remained thus chatting and gesticulating, her bust still rested upon the table.

Soon the Gurkha orderly returned, head bent down, intent over the two plates of hot soup that he carried. All unconscious, he approached the board and placed the plate in front of the lady or, rather, on the lady's front.

I have only once seen a Gurkha blush and only once heard a Russian lady utter in pained surprise.

\* \* \* \*

Winter came and snow lay six feet deep on the mountains. Softly the myriad fat flakes floated to earth. Night settled down and still the flakes fell white about us.

By the light of a candle the Adjutant on his camp bed sat writing before a wood fire in his billet. The little warmth of his fire melted the snow on the roof and the water dripped, then dribbled through, to turn the mud floor into a slippery bog.

*Memsahib chha.* (Here's a lady.)

Turning, he saw a sentry at the open door with a girl of twenty holding a small boy by the hand.

"Oh dear, oh dear!" he groaned, "*You* here again!"

[*Enter the interpreter.*]

"Where's she come from *this* time, Alexander?"

"Over the mountains from the Caspian, Sair."

"Gosh! In this snow? What's that with her?"

"Her younger brother, Sair."

"She's produced three sisters already—and an aunt, too, I think. . . Is the boy a Russian?"

[*Gabble gabble.*]

"Yes, Sair."

"Then I suppose out of the eighty million males in Russia I've got to believe he's her brother. Right ho!"

He picked up the receiver of his field telephone and buzzed for half a minute.

"Doctor," he said, "the tow-haired Kuddlybobski girl's here again. Clear out of your hut like a good chap and doss down in mine. . . . Shut up. . . . You're very fortunate to have the chance of being unselfish again. . . . She's got a little brother with her this time. . . . Stoke your fire up before you leave; they're soaked through. I'll collect some dry clothes for them. . . . I didn't bring any feminine clothes with me on service, did you? No? Odd! Thanks! Take some of those pictures off your wall before you leave."

"Alexander, take her to the Doctor's hut as usual, will you? And tell her never to come back again if she can possibly help it. We've run out of female clothing."

*[Exit the party.]*

He scribbled a note to all his officers, asking for contributions of clothing.

As time went on, the various officers' orderlies brought in a fair heap of woollen garments.

"Here orderly, chuck those ordnance vests and pants of mine on the heap."

He continued his writing.

"Let's see what you've got. . . . Lord! Eight ordnance vests and pants. Nothing else?"

"No, Sahib. None of the other officers have any more clothes than you have."

"Gorea, do these damned bullwool vests and pants make you itch too?"

"Yes, Sahib."

"Yet you can wear them, you noble creature? . . . Well, well . . ." reflectively, "they'll keep her warm and . . . I don't think she'll come here again. Take 'em along to the Doctor's hut, Gorea, and knock before you go in."

At eight the next morning, with the sun glittering across the snow, the Adjutant walked to the Doctor's hut to tell her that the Column Headquarter "flivver" had arrived to take her and the boy to civilisation, a hundred miles away.

They emerged and he looked at them curiously. Both seemed very fat. So they'd got on all eight pairs between them; they weren't missing anything. As they walked past him they wriggled their backs.

Awkwardly, with one hand they said goodbye to him scratching ardently with the other.

"They'll get into practice before they reach Teheran," he thought.

He banged the door on them and they were off. As the open car receded down the road, he saw the boy rubbing his sister's back with both hands, wriggling as he did so.

"She won't come here again, Alexander. You and I know what it is, don't we?"

"Yes, Sair?"

"Four vests and four pants each; all worthy of Nessus! A mixture of thermogene wool and hayseeds. I wonder how Ordinance discovers these things. Wonderful people, wonderful."

## SALIENT AND SOMME

[THE BATTLEFIELDS OF 1916-17 REVISITED]

By "JEBB"

In the twenty-one years between 1918 and 1939, the idea of a visit to the battlefields of France and Flanders was probably considered at one time or another by every officer who took part in the war in the West. It certainly passed through the minds of four officers—let us call them *A*, *B*, *G* and *D*—late of a pioneer battalion of a famous city regiment, who had managed to keep in touch; but owing to circumstances such as failure to synchronise leave, it was not until April, 1939, that they were able to put the idea into practice. And though France may not be a very popular subject at the present time, an account of their tour and impressions may not be without interest to those readers of this journal who themselves knew the Salient and Somme in the years 1914—1918.

When a suitable date had been fixed, it was left to *B*—the only member who had turned "pro" and who, by reason of his present appointment and station, was the best qualified to undertake it—to carry out the preliminary staff arrangements. These consisted mainly of correspondence with the A. A. on the subject of facilities for *B*'s car which was chosen to conduct the party, of working out the itinerary and programme, and of obtaining maps; fortunately, *B* had free access to a large and varied stock.

And so it was that at about 10-30 A.M. on the morning of the 11th April, 1939, the party rendezvoused at the gangway of the "Isle of Thanet" at Folkstone. *A* and *G* had travelled overnight from Chester (where both were in business—the former as school master and the latter as deputy bank manager), breakfasted at Euston and proceeded by tube to Victoria for the "leave train" (9 A.M.). This, according to *G*, was all quite like old times, but the absence of khaki on the familiar platform and of a slight sinking feeling in the pit of the stomach suggested it was not quite the same as the *status quo in bello*. *B* and *D* had meanwhile arrived by road, *B* having shortened his journey by staying overnight at *D*'s.

Punctually at 10-50 the "Isle of Thanet" cast off; the sea was calm (to the intense relief of at least one member—and there was



no escorting destroyer! The weather, too, was glorious and clouds there were none, except metaphorically, for only four days before Mussolini had celebrated Good Friday by invading Albania and *B* had an uneasy feeling that military reactions to this move might result in his recall. However, all was well and the party settled down to enjoy themselves as only old friends can who meet again after many years and have much to discuss. The time crossing the Channel was spent, first, in allocation of duties, settled after some ineffective modesty as: *B*, car and photos; *A*, cash; *G*, maps and *D* billeting and coping with natives; the latter duty, however, was gradually taken over by *A*, who showed that he was one of those Englishmen who can cope with *any* foreigner or native. *D* also had to exercise general supervision over maps when *G* showed signs of losing the way, and over the car when *B* showed signs of confusing the left and the right of the road and doing other things *interdits* to *autos*.

This done, we had to try and get up-to-date with each other's history. (We may as well use the first person plural as it is quite obvious that the author was one of the party.) In things essential we stepped back quickly but externally at least were hardly the gay young things we once were, witness *A* greying on top, *B*'s baldness and uncertain leg, *G*'s uncertain interior. *D* alone belied the general impression of increasing senility, his youthfulness and ringing laugh taking us immediately back to the days, 23 years before, when we had been boys together. Incidentally, the advantages of doing a tour of this nature with those who had served in the same unit were soon evident; where one memory defaulted, there were others to supply the deficiency.

Boulogne Harbour—entered gently backwards—seemed much as ever as also the town or what we saw of it on a short stroll before lunch. It was easy to determine the exact position of the one-time R.T.O.'s Office and Officers' Club; so familiar indeed were the old landmarks near the quay that I think none of us had much difficulty in painting a mental picture of the last stand at and evacuation of Boulogne when it took place a little over a year later.

After lunch, when *A* insisted on our drinking each other's health in champagne cocktails, we collected the car which had followed us on the cargo boat. The A.A.'s excellent arrangements greatly simplified the whole car business and particularly that of getting it across frontiers, a process in which we were involved no less than four times in the space of three days.

We left Boulogne at 2-30 P.M. by the St. Omer road for Ypres. *B* is still not quite clear why, in planning the tour, he did not elect to visit the Somme first and return *via* the Salient, for each member of the party had in fact seen the fighting in that order; but it didn't seem to matter in the end, and one advantage of the method chosen was that we were able to celebrate our last night together in an entirely suitable place—the Restaurant Godbert in Amiens: of which more anon.

An attempt to find the convent at Wisques which had housed the Second Army School (*B* had done a course there in 1917) was only partially successful. The place was there all right, but now appeared to be a monastic institution; and at the sight of a brown-frocked brother at the lodge we decided that our French was insufficient to cope with the situation and passed on. A cup of tea at St. Omer was pleasant, for the weather was astonishingly warm and *B* felt that thick plus-fours and cardigan, suitable for springtime in England, were overdoing it. Incidentally, the arrangement had been that we should each bring one suitcase with one change of suit for the evening. *G*, however, scorned this liberal allowance, contenting himself with an ancient rucksack and a change of shirt only.

From St. Omer, after a glance at the ruined abbey, we proceeded to Cassel—very pretty on its hill; trees and hedges seemed more forward than in England. It was as we wound our way up the twisty pave road into the little town that we supposed that we should shortly come across some signs of a continuation of the Maginot Line to the North, for we were then rapidly approaching the Belgian frontier. But when we emerged from the town on to the Eastern slopes of the hill, from which stretched a wide panorama extending from North of Ypres to Armentieres and Bethune, no warlike evidence of any kind was to be seen. Not a gun, not a pill-box, not a strand of barbed wire; nor did we see anything of the sort throughout our tour. It was all a bit puzzling, and a little disturbing too. After all, it was six months after Munich and various countries, even including our own, had been pretty busy in the interval. But France...?

And so, still puzzled, we came past the frontier post at Adele, to Poperinghe. Here we visited the "old house" once headquarters, now museum and sanctuary of Toc H: absorbingly interesting as museum and beautiful as sanctuary, especially the original chapel under the roof rafters. What of it now, and of the devoted concierge in charge, who must be known to thousands of Toc H enthusiasts who have sheltered there during their visits to

"Pop" and "Wipers"? My own impression is that Toc H "old house," likewise the many memorials and cemeteries, stand above enmity and strife, and that the caretakers and gardeners are being given every facility to continue their good work.

The Pop—Ypres road still had a slightly grim feel for us, and the proportion of young trees to old increased significantly as we approached Ypres. We stayed at Skindles Hotel by the station: comfortable enough but rather anglicized and catering too much for the likes of us.

Next day, the 12th, again broke fine and warm, and we spent the morning exploring the Salient. To get to Passchendaele one has to pass through the square and under the Menin Gate; the former now contains a new Cathedral and Cloth Hall, and one can at least be thankful that in the rapidity of the retreat in 1940 they are unlikely to have suffered destruction a second time. The Menin Gate is wonderfully impressive. While G looked for his brother's name, B stood in pride and pleasure in front of the panel on which are inscribed the names of those of his Indian battalion who fell in the defence of the Channel Ports. The P.M.s of the A.T. Companies of 1940, though involved in very little fighting, were worthy successors of those units who came from India to France in 1914.

From the Menin Gate we went first through Zonnebeke to Tyne Cot cemetery. There is an old German pill-box in this cemetery and the memorial cross is mounted on a second. Surrounding half the cemetery are panels of names, an appendix to those at the Menin Gate; together they name 90,000 British, who have no known grave in Belgium alone. Then back to Zonnebeke and the 7th Division Memorial (our Division); thence to the Buttes Cemetery, magnificently placed in Polygon Wood, and a spot of bother along the soft earth track on the North side of the wood before we hit the Menin Road and carried along it as far as Gheluvelt. Returning we had the Boche view of Hooze and Ypres—distinctly the better view of course; in fact it was not really until this moment that we appreciated to the full what our troops in the Salient had to suffer in those grim four years: from any O.P. on that ridge one could have spotted a rat moving, let alone every man and gun and wagon. West of Sanctuary Wood is a small patch of ground preserved as a genuine antique. At 2 fr. 50 a head one could walk along duckboards in fairly respectable "tranchees," well decorated with bits of wire, "obuses" and other (non-human) remains, including, true to life, a trench pump

that wouldn't work. The adjoining café had a good little museum and a kaleidoscope which could well have been used in the further education of those who think war funny.

Returning *via* Zillebeke Lake—marvellously peaceful—to Ypres for lunch, we afterwards made enquiries of the Imperial War Graves Commission Office of the whereabouts of the grave of *D*'s brother, killed in 1914. This office was admirably organized, as are all and, in a couple of minutes or so, not only gave *D* the information he wanted but also enlightened *B* regarding a missing cousin, whose name he was told was commemorated on the Somme Memorial at Thiepval. All through our tour we were immensely struck by the trimness and beauty of the cemeteries themselves, and of the care lavished upon them by their British gardeners; an impressive point being the reverent care and appropriateness shown for remote peoples such as Indians and Chinese, as well as for the few German graves to be found in many of our cemeteries. But, as *G* feelingly remarked, it was curious that governments should be so careful of their own and others' dead and often so careless of their own and others' living!

The afternoon we spent pottering round Dickebusch looking for various haunts of the battalion in the autumn of 1917, before it was whisked off to Italy with the 7th Division to bolster up the fleeing Italians (whose habits don't seem to have changed much in spite of Mussolini); we then went on to Bailleul for tea. This meant crossing the frontier again into France and *A* remarked that he didn't think he had ever crossed the frontier into another country and re-crossed it just to have tea. We returned to Ypres *via* Locre, Reninghelst and Ouderdom, in time to accompany the English chaplain of Ypres to the Menin Gate to hear Retreat, sounded nightly by two Belgian buglers. There was something particularly moving about this; and indeed, without being in the least psychic, one could not help being deeply conscious of the "atmosphere" of Ypres and of a feeling that the town was still being watched over and guarded by an unseen host. Returning to dinner, the chaplain told us that bodies were still being discovered on the battlefields, and he himself had read the burial service over three that very afternoon. Every effort was made by the War Graves authorities to identify them, even after that immense interval and, curiously, the best clues were apparently not identity discs or personal effects but boots, which still often retained their W.D. numbers.

Our plan for the third day, the 13th, gloriously hot again, was to make for the Somme battlefields and Albert roughly by

way of the old British front line, stopping at places of interest *en route*. Leaving Ypres by the Lille Gate, where the battalion had lived in the ramparts on its first visit to the Salient in 1917, we drove *via* St. Eloi and Messines to the East end of Hill 63. Here were some nice bits of old trench and a glorious view—North to Wytschaete and the Messines ridge, South across "Plugstreet Wood" to Armentieres. *B* and *D* were reminded of the days in August, 1916, when they lay on the top of this hill, after delivering their platoons to assist the 1st Australian Tunnelling Coy. in the construction of a vast dugout in its interior. We could find no traces of the dugout, however, nor had we time to visit our old home in Oosthove Farm.

It was an odd coincidence that, while we were thus revisiting scenes of the old war, rumours and threats of the next were at a maximum. The customs at Armentieres had it that most of Western Europe was actually mobilising at that moment, but, fortunately, they were anticipating the event by some five months.

The Indian Memorial at Neuve Chapelle, just North of the industrial area, was a notable stopping place, and, of course, of particular interest to *B* whose present battalion's mess album contains photographs of its unveiling. Near-by was a Portuguese cemetery, equally well cared for.

Our road then took us past Loos and, though the place had no more than an academic interest for us, we stopped to take a photograph of its ugly chimneys and scattered "fosses," reflecting on how uncomfortable it must have been to battle in such a congested area. Our next objective meanwhile was Vimy Ridge; a post-war "drive" of about  $1\frac{3}{4}$  miles runs along the top of the ridge from the main road to the Canadian Memorial, which is magnificent; we were impressed also by its wonderful position and by the dominance of the ridge over the surrounding country. Much of the woods on top of the ridge are *defense d'entrer*, but there is a good section of old front line, with craters, wire and trenches; the concrete imitation sandbags were perhaps a necessary artificiality. We came away feeling anew the futility and insanity of man having lived such a life, and preparing to live something like it again. But evidently the German General Staff felt the same about it and took steps to ensure that we should not live that particular life again, at any rate in France.

Arras was reached punctually at 1 o'clock for lunch at the Hotel Brasserie Moderne, just outside the station; and so we came at last to the Somme, our own country indeed. It had



been interesting to watch the countryside gradually changing from the unexciting yet strangely attractive "wet Flanders plain" to the open rolling downs of Picardy—grimly attractive too, at least to us who had known them so well; though *B*, who had spent the previous six weeks in an intensive study of modern defence, with its insistence on anti-tank obstacles and localities, was much worried at the complete lack of same in this part of France. No rivers, no canals, no woods, no railway embankments; villages widely scattered; the whole countryside resembling a vast gently undulating patchwork quilt. And as no effort had been made to supplement the lack of natural obstacles by artificial means, the outlook wasn't too rosy. (Nor, in the event, was reality. There literally was nothing to stop the Huns between the Meuse and the Somme, not even—as one might have supposed—a few Frenchmen.)

But to return. A fortunate trench map helped us to fix precisely the environments of Bullecourt—a Bullecourt so new and trim and smug, looking on us as though to say: "War? Did you say there had been a war?" *D*'s Pelican Avenue and the whole of the battalion's Bullecourt Avenue (one of the more notable of the many communication trenches we constructed); the spot on Ecoust Road where the C.O. and his runner had been killed by an unlucky shell on the 4th May, 1917: all were located. This was a great hour—made more so by the discovery of Mills bombs and other souvenirs right on top of where had been our Bullecourt Avenue. Souvenirs, we noticed, were much more frequent on the Somme than in the Salient, indicating perhaps that the Flemish are tidier by nature than the French. We finished at the old camps fore and aft of Mory Village; part of the Abbaye barn here seemed miraculously to have survived the war.

And now we must not pause too long but take the reader rapidly to Ervillers (no signpost in the brick heaps now: "This is Ervillers") and Courcelles Halt; through Logeast Wood (an old camp site) and Bucquoy to Puisieux, which yielded tea. It was at Puisieux, during the withdrawal of the Boche to the Hindenburg Line that *B* had had his first glimpse of Indian cavalry. Refreshed, we carried on by the main road through Serre (not much bigger than in 1917) to Mailly Maillet, and thence down through Auchonvillers to Beaumont Hamel. *A*, *B* and *D* here recalled the feeling of nakedness when taking parties to the line, apparently in full view of the Boche. The surroundings of Wagon Road were peaceful enough that evening, but its surface

was a trial for the Vauxhall. Sites of various jobs were fixed approximately; just hereabouts Nobby Clark collected his 25 German prisoners with a sergeant and two men. We missed the Newfoundland memorial but noted "Y" Ravine appreciably on our own way down to Beaucourt, and remembered that somewhere near here General Freyberg had won his V.C. Our weather was failing us at last and we ran through Aveluy Wood in rain down to Albert. Here we noted with pleasure the restoration to the perpendicular of the Virgin on the summit of the cathedral—that golden figure, so well known to thousands of Empire soldiers, which for years had defied in its perilous poise all the laws of gravity—and so came to the Hotel de la Paix, a small place but kindly. The climax of their efforts to give us really English fare was a dish of bacon and eggs in the middle of dinner.

The morning of the 14th, grey and threatening, saw us retracing our way up the Ancre Valley to Authuille, crossing the river at Aveluy. Authuille Bridge seemed not to exist and we went on to the Mill Bridge. "The river's clean where the raw blood flowed," but the mill had not been reinstated. The village is confusing and G took us up Campbell Avenue which degenerated into a soft earth track, so that to reach the Thiepval Memorial we had to go back to Authuille. This memorial, though impressive and wonderfully sited on the Thiepval ridge which dominates the bloodiest portions of the Somme battlefields, we thought not so fine as the others; its primary object, however, is to record the names of 73,367 who fell on the Somme and have no known grave, and B found with comparative ease the names of his cousin and also a school friend, both of whom died on the 1st July, 1916.

By this time the weather had completely collapsed and a pitiless rain had set in which, while being annoying for photography, at least helped old associations and gave that Somme countryside a much more familiar appearance. Driving past "Mucky Farm" (no longer "site of") we joined the Alber-Bapaume road at Pozieres (no longer "in ruins"), and here fixed the site of our October 1916 camp, so attractively placed between 60-pounders and 8-inch hows. On the main road none could remember the exact position of Canadian Avenue and other choice jobs of that commendably brief period; but, proceeding further, we recognized Courcellette and Martinpuish (hereabouts had been many derelict Mark 1 tanks) and the familiar hulk of the Butte de

Wariencourt. The five miles on to Bapaume had, of course, been in Boche territory in those days, and it seemed odd now to be coasting down the road at 45 M.P.H.

Stopping only for petrol in Bapaume, we turned South through Thillois and Flers to Longueval, thus approaching from the Boche point of view that grim area where we had worked in Aug.-Sept., 1916, from our camp in Fricourt Wood. The map makes it just four miles straight from Fricourt Wood to Waterlot Farm: it was a long four miles those nights.

Skirting the West and Southern sides of Delville Wood and stopping for a moment to admire the South-African memorial, we came to Ginchy—taken at what cost to the 7th and other divisions and worth what when taken?—and Guillemont; then round and by Waterlot Farm to Longueval. Here was a marked example of the shrinking which appeared to have taken place everywhere. The triangle Longueval—Ginchy—Guillemont is about half a square mile in area; yet, except for the corner of Delville Wood, it contains all the ground of the twelve days' operations, given 16 pages in *Atkinson's History of the 7th Division*, where the 22nd Brigade, in the line only six days, alone lost 1,100 men. Our own jobs—laying tapes and what not—in and near Ginchy Avenue, Stout Trench and Porter Trench, were all in the same triangle—and now it looked like a couple of fields.

And so to Bernafay Wood and Montauban. *B* here took a photo in pouring rain from the crest where, going up in the dusk, one got the first view of the said little triangle and tried to decide whether "the barrage was as bad to-night" across the entrance to those jobs. It usually was; and, incidentally, *B* and *D* had their first experience of gas in this selfsame triangle. A jolly spot all round.

Following the ridge which formed the pre-July 1st, 1916 German support system (how they did appreciate the value of observation, those chaps), we came *via* Dantzig Alley cemetery outside Mametz to Fricourt. Here *G*'s map-reading (map corrected to 2-6-16) and *B*'s determination "to go somewhere even if it is wrong" sent us to Contalmaison, whence a road which fulfilled its promise brought us back to Bottom Wood in the valley North of Mametz. Here the old track up the East side of the valley seemed as if it might function and it just did, though requiring clearing of barbed wire and other obstacles from time to time. And very pleased we were, for we were able to reconstruct July 14th, 1916 (second phase of the Somme Battle)—a thrilling hour. Stopping the car at the head of the valley we

walked back along the very track which *B* and *D*'s platoon helped to repair on that day, and found almost the exact spot on the bank under which *B* and *D* had consumed a lunch of biscuits and sardines, to the accompaniment of the rat-tat of indirect M.G. fire from somewhere Bazentin way and with the bullets kicking up the dust on the far side of the track.

It was remarkable really how, after all these years, one could still locate spots like this with almost complete accuracy. The orientation of landmarks that the Huns had failed to obliterate, a twist in the road, a familiar bank—all helped; and an interesting example of how, having found the spot, one instinctively looked for further landmarks, was shown here below Bazentin when *B*, turning to *D*, said: "From what I remember, we ought to be able to see High Wood from here." *D* agreed, but the wood remained invisible until, leaving the track and strolling a few yards up the hill, it suddenly appeared over the horizon. In July, 1916, High Wood *had* been visible from the track; in April, 1939, it had ceased to be so because the new trees had not yet grown high enough!

Fricourt! *B* and *D*'s first view of this village (so-called), in April, 1916, had been obtained through a periscope from the old British front-line trench. Now, busy and prosperous in its new coat, it produced not only a most friendly estaminet where we obtained a superb lunch of omelette, café, rolls and butter for 2 fr. 50, but—better still—a little shop where could be purchased the most succulent Camambert cheeses, eventually to be much appreciated by the old folks at home. We then walked up the hill to the Bois Français craters, part of the battalion sector in April, 1916, before we were converted into Pioneers. Here, by some freak of nature, both British and German front lines were still easily discernible in the chalk, though filled in many years before, and *G* said they would remain so, after the fashion of "barrows" in England. Of souvenirs again there were plenty, and *D* testified to his eternal youth and irresponsibility by picking up a Boche "pineapple" in remarkably good state of preservation and casually casting it from him onto the road "just to see if it was all right." It was, luckily for us, and now adorns his mantelpiece in Claygate (or did). All *B* was able to bring back was an entrenching tool head, which later did good work in the garden, but in the rush of departure under India Office orders in late August it was, I fear, forgotten.

Back in the car, we were arrested. *G* seemed rather pleased, as it maintained his tradition of never going abroad without

getting arrested, but the delay was a nuisance to us though pleasurable for the crowd. After lengthy explanations, the youthful poilus let us go, smiles and compliments all round: "C'est pour la rire." All the same we should have liked to know what all the excitement was about. We suspected it must have been the presence, higher on the hill, above the Bois Francais craters, of new defensive works or perhaps an A.A. battery. Had we misjudged the Daladier Government after all?

Many other Somme spots had to remain unvisited, but on the Maricourt Road we found the grandstand seat from which *B* and *D* had watched the great attack start on July 1st, 1916, later to follow up the attackers and assist in consolidating the ground won; we looked across too at the country near Carnoy where *A* started his war in 1915. Then to Suzanne and Bray-sur-Somme, where *A* used to fish for spies during one peaceful period, and on past the Bois des Tailles to Morlancourt, the battalion's base of those early 1916 days. Here a new war seemed to be starting as billets were being fixed while *B* and *D* talked with Madame of their old farm. So instantly recognizable was it that both declared it must be the original "B" Company Mess. But no: Madame stated emphatically that "les sales Boches" had razed the village, farm and all, to the ground in the Spring of 1918.

We paused at the top of the hill above Corbie to gaze down upon the wide marshy valley of the Somme (yes, here, at last, was a fair enough anti-tank obstacle if it could be made use of), had tea in the town, and then continued *via* the Australian Memorial at Villers Bretonneux to Amiens. It was fun to be back in this nice old town, to savour again something of the joys that made it the local Paris of 1914—1918, haven of all who could snatch 24 hours' leave from the Somme front. Among these joys a good bath, a good dinner and the ability to shop were at least as important as any; and though we had not been without baths we had had only one really good dinner (at the Excelsior in Ypres). We therefore decided by unanimous agreement that our farewell dinner must be at The Godbert, our one regret being that it could not be preceded by cocktails at Charley's Bar in the little street near the cathedral. The kindly staff of the Godbert, at which business did not seem to be too flourishing, metaphorically fell on our necks when they heard our halting French and recognized us as one-time "officiers Anglais," and if business was slack there was no falling off in the standard of cuisine for which they were famed. What a meal they gave us! It was one of those



notable dinners which are long remembered, not only by reason of the occasion and its associations, but for a particular item on the menu. The item on this occasion was *Souffle à Grand Marnier*—a luscious foaming masterpiece, each portion being cooked and served in a silver dish about the size of an average finger bowl.

As to shopping, no visit to Amiens, however brief, would have been complete without a stroll up the Rue des Trois Cailloux, wherein subalterns in a burst of duty had been wont to purchase lace handkerchiefs, bon-bons and what-nots for their girl friends at home. On this occasion *B* and *D*, being now long married and domesticated, confined themselves to one coffee percolator apiece.

The Cathedral must be revisited too, of course, a place of dim cool beauty as of yore, and then, with a guilty sense of having spent too long in Amiens, we set off for Abbeville and Calais. Fortunately the routes-nationales are fast (German motorised troops must have appreciated this too, in May a year later), and we were able to stop for a moment in Montreuil (G.H.Q.—what a war!) and turn aside from Etaples to sniff the sea breezes at le Touquet; more fashionable, but not thereby more pleasing, than the Paris Plage of the last war which it seems to have replaced, and we missed the silly but delightful horse-trams.

It seemed stupid to have to go beyond Boulogne, but Calais gave the advantage of being able to cross the Channel in the same vessel—s.s. *Autocarrier*—as the car; though from the point of view of completing the mental picture we were able to form of the events of a year later, it was a pity that it could not have been Dunkirk. The crossing caused us all to be more thoughtful and was followed by a long wait at Dover for the Vauxhall to be disembarked. *A* and *G* were to have gone on by train, but *B* suggested taking all to London; he nearly didn't owing to the obstinacy with which a lorry, coming on to the quay as we drove off, not only came round the corner on the left-hand side of the road, but refused to change from the left-hand side—*B*, meanwhile with equal obstinacy refusing to move from the right-hand side. But we got past (that lorry driver was a marvel of self-control) and so, through pleasant Kent to unpleasant Waterloo (for *D*) and Euston (for *A* and *G*). Thus ended a memorable holiday—well, no, hardly a holiday.

To attempt to produce lessons from a rambling reminiscent article of this nature seems out of place, but one might perhaps bring it to a close with the following observations:

*As to the Tour.*—If the reader feels like doing one himself, Hitler eventually permitting, he is advised to do it with a pal, to do it by car and to leave all arrangements in connection with the car to the A.A. or R.A.C. He will then find it quite easy, surprisingly inexpensive (assuming a reasonable rate of exchange) and extremely enjoyable and instructive.

*As to the Government of France.*—What can one say—except, perhaps, “Alas, my poor brother”—of a mentality that spends millards on the defence of the common frontier with the age-old enemy, but completely ignores the frontier across which that same enemy invaded his country and as near as anything defeated him 25 years before?

*As to the People of France.*—From the kindly, even affectionate manner in which we four musketeers were welcomed by all sorts and conditions of people on that short tour—porters, customs officials, hotel and restaurant servants, estaminet and shopkeepers, villagers and farm workers—one can be quite convinced that in spite of their own apathy and the defeatism of their present leaders, the common people of France still cry “Vive l’Angleterre” in their hearts, and pray fervently for a victory of British arms.

## IS FEDERAL UNION POSSIBLE?

By "ALEX"

*"We are not fighting to preserve an old world but to build a new.  
We are not straining resources to foster the greatness of a  
state, but to win for men and women everywhere  
the first benefits of civilisation."*

—Rt. Hon. Anthony Eden, M.P.

We are fighting for security so that all nations will be free to live their own lives without fear. How can this security be obtained in the world after this conflict? Many of us must have asked ourselves this question and discussed it with others. In England now people from the highest to the most humble positions are discussing it every day. The Government are already dealing with this tremendous problem—a lasting peace. Some international system for the prevention of wars will have to be created. Whether it will take a rejuvenated but different form of the present League of Nations or of a federation, remains to be seen.

In this short article I am going to attempt to give an account of Federal Union (an organization which has been started at Home) and what its aims are. I should like to say at the very beginning that I am only writing this article as I think the subject is of topical interest and not because I am necessarily a believer in Federal Union.

At a time when we are engaged in a great European struggle, which has the appearance of becoming an international maelstrom, it may appear to some that the moment is hardly with us for fashioning the world of the future. I feel that view is mistaken. The present government is not leaving anything to the future and has already set up a committee of experts to prepare plans for the relief of unemployment after the war. The government is looking ahead and appears to believe in the proverb "Forewarned is Forearmed."

A clear vision of the better world that we wish to see emerging from our struggle will give us heart to endure to the end the bitter sacrifices that may be necessary for success. If lasting peace is to be established throughout the world, the nations of the world must be ready to form one society. They must be prepared

in one way or another to surrender that absolute sovereignty which now makes each nation state the sole arbiter of its rights and actions. The time has come when national sovereignties should be replaced by the application of federation across old-established national boundaries.

The aims of federal union are:

1. To obtain support for a federation of free peoples under a common government directly or indirectly elected by and responsible to the peoples for their common affairs, with national self-government for national affairs.
2. To ensure that any federation so formed shall be regarded as the first step towards ultimate world federation.
3. Through such a federation to secure peace, based on economic security and civil rights for all.

For the Allies victory is certain, but this time they must not lose the peace. Some form of New Order in the world must be constructed which will give the peoples of the world security, freedom and confidence. If it is not, then no peace will be made but only an uneasy truce.

Such an international order cannot be designed overnight. Just as we had to be prepared for total war, so we shall have to be prepared for total peace.

Federal Union believes that so long as each individual nation retains the unfettered right to be judge in its own cause, there can be no security and freedom in this world. In this way international agreements are made to be broken. Hitler has given us enough examples of treaty-breaking. He is not the only one either. Will any one feel secure at the end of this conflict if Germany promises to renounce aggression but keeps control of her armed forces, however much they are temporarily reduced? In the same way, will Germans feel confident of just treatment if the Allies do no more than promise it but keep a preponderance of force? Will the small nations ever again feel confident if their security depends on guarantees by the great powers?

Federal Union believes there is only one solution. Nations which wish to obtain that freedom and security behind which they can develop their own culture and institutions must have a common foreign policy and a united defence. It means that they must have a common government elected by the peoples of the different nations to regulate those affairs which they have in common. The decisions that are made may be good or they may be

bad but provided the electorate are free to criticise and oppose they can always be altered.

In this way the citizens of different nations unite in one great commonwealth under a federal government, which they freely elect. These nations form a united front to those remaining outside the federation by their single foreign policy and a single defence policy, with a single government regulating their tariffs, currency and migration in the interests of them all. At the same time each nation preserves its national government to control its own internal affairs. Such a federal government would also have power to ensure that colonies, dependencies, etc., are administered in the interests of the inhabitants and not for the benefit of any particular country.

In broad outline this is the system that Federal Union is trying to create. It provides security by pooling power to cure power politics. It means an end to wasteful economic rivalry. It provides laws which can be enforced in Courts of Justice and which can be amended constitutionally as changing circumstances demand. It insists on the freedom and equality of man and is based on the principle that the state is made for the man and not the man for the state.

If such a Union is to be formed the first nucleus would be the British Empire and the United States. This would be a formidable front even at the start and would without doubt command the respect of all nations no matter how great and would soon find peace-loving nations only too ready to join.

If the League of Nations is revived, it will have to be on an entirely new basis—a federal basis. National Sovereignty in international affairs must be done away with. Let us think what National Sovereignty means and why it must go. It means that:

- (i) Each national government is responsible for making laws for the welfare of its own people without consideration of the effect these laws may have on the people of another nation.
- (ii) Each national government has the right of deciding what are the vital interests of its own people without consideration of the vital interests of other nations.
- (iii) Each national government has the duty of securing and protecting these vital interests.

Because each nation is sovereign, the people of State *A* have no direct redress if their interests and welfare are damaged by the



laws and decisions of the government of State *B*. They can only protest to their own government *A*, which in turn can only protest to the government of State *B*. If State *B* ignores the protest, government *A* can only submit or resort to threats of economic or military retaliation.

Therefore, national sovereignty leads to:

- (i) Imperialism—to secure vital interests.
- (ii) Trade Restrictions—to protect vested interests.
- (iii) Armaments and War—to protect vital and vested interests or to obtain economic or strategic advantages which have become vital owing to changed circumstances.
- (iv) The Organization of the state for military purposes and, therefore, the restriction of individual liberty.

The League of Nations of yesterday was based on National Sovereignty, i.e., the only guarantee of the observance of the covenant was the signature of the member states. Therefore, it depended for its effectiveness and authority on the good faith of governments which knew that, in the last resort, they could not rely on their fellow member states because every question would be judged from the angle of the immediate self-interest of each member state. The League could not make laws, it could only pass resolutions and rely on each government to pass laws ratifying the resolutions. It could not do more than recommend positive action to bring about peaceful change. Its decisions in major questions had to be unanimous. It was composed of delegates of governments who had always to seek their national and party self-interest. Finally it had no economic side.

The Federal Government, on the other hand:

- (i) would have power to make laws which would bind individual men and women in the same way as the laws of national governments;
- (ii) would raise its own taxes and loans;
- (iii) would act as authority to which all international boards and institutions would be responsible. It could use them to administer its laws; and
- (iv) would have its own police force to enforce the observance of Federal Laws and to arrest individuals, who are responsible for a breach of these laws.

The Federal Government would control:

- (i) the foreign policy of the Union;
- (ii) the pooled fighting forces of every nation within the Union. Thus there would no longer be separate national armies and no national government would have the power to challenge the Federal Government's authority; and
- (iii) such other matters as were defined in the constitution to be of common concern to every nation within the Union, e.g., trade and currency restrictions and colonial administration.

I have enumerated above the ideals for which Federal Union is working. These ideals may never take effect in exactly the same way as the Union would wish. But it is quite possible that these ideals may be partly or wholly incorporated in some other form of international government after this conflict. Federal Union is doing research work and compiling data which would undoubtedly be of value to any form of international settlement. An international government, if it is to be successful, must have the power to enforce its laws. This power is the dominating factor.

## ARMoured LORRIES

By MAJOR D. H. J. WILLIAMS, O.B.E.

### I

In the issue of the Journal for April, 1940, an article appeared on the armoured lorries of the South Waziristan Scouts. A year has passed since then and naturally alterations in construction owing to the war and alterations in design owing to experience have taken place.

The alteration owing to the war has been the abandonment of construction with proper bullet-proof plate which has not been obtainable. The last half dozen vehicles have been built entirely of mild steel of sorts. The change has proved quite satisfactory for our purposes and the resulting body is strong, simple in construction, cheap in cost and sufficiently light in weight.

The principle of such bullet-proof construction is that of two or more thin plates with air spaces in between them or in certain cases "sandwiches" of wood or both. The thickness and the number of plates which must be used depends on the projectile to be kept out. In general, two  $\frac{1}{8}$ th-inch mild-steel plates with an air space of two inches between them will stop a .303 bullet at point-blank range though the inner plate would be bulged at the point of impact. This remark is only intended as a very rough guide to the stopping power of such plates. The design of the South Waziristan Scouts lorries lends itself readily to strong and rapid body construction by this method, using material obtainable everywhere in India.

The alterations in the design of the lorry body have been firstly, a considerable increase in the protected areas and, secondly, the introduction of a gun-ring for an automatic weapon in the roof by the driver's seat. With the exception of the major portion of the roof, the top of the bonnet and the tyres, the whole lorry is now protected. The major portion of the roof is the part which normally carries a load and thereby gets some fair protection. The accompanying photographs show the general appearance of the vehicle and the position of the gun-ring. All earlier lorries have been altered to give the same protection as the new ones but have not been given a gun-ring.

With regard to weights and loadings the detail for the Chevrolet Chassis in use is as follows:

Maximum permissible weight ...	15,900 lbs.
Unladen weight, chassis and body ...	7,200 lbs.
Maximum permissible load (therefore)	8,700 lbs.

The last figure, therefore, permits a load of about 109 maunds, though in actual fact we do not load to that limit. When men are being carried the total load is probably more like half that amount.

It was not mentioned in the previous article that these armoured bodies are easily lifted "in one piece" from a chassis for transfer to another one. Removal of some 24 bolts enables the body to be lifted clear. Another chassis can then be run underneath and the body lowered and bolted down. This does not apply to the armour round the engine and bonnet, radiator, shutter, etc., which are all separate articles.

The first batch of lorries turned out have by now covered 15—20,000 miles apiece on the roads and have given no trouble. The material cost of building a body in our own workshops comes to about Rs. 700 without painting at the present time. Not a very high figure which, of course, excludes labour.

The Mahsud has spent an amusing year testing out these lorries as a sideline to other activities. He has scored some sixty hits on vehicles and four men have been very slightly wounded. It is interesting to note that, despite the nature of the country, no bullet has so far hit a roof from above. No tyres have been hit.

## II

Another vehicle which has been in use here for eighteen months but has not so far been described is an armour-protected gun-truck.

In 1939 this Corps was issued with some Post guns for the first time. The number issued was not, of course, sufficient for all Posts and, consequently, movement of guns between Posts was, and is, frequently necessary.

The spectacle of a gun being dragged on its iron tyres behind a lorry (maximum towing speed 5 m.p.h.!) for distances of 20 to 60 miles was not one which could be endured for very long.

Some sort of gun-carrying vehicle, capable of moving with M.T. convoys at their ordinary speed, had to be produced. The accompanying photographs illustrate the result. The truck

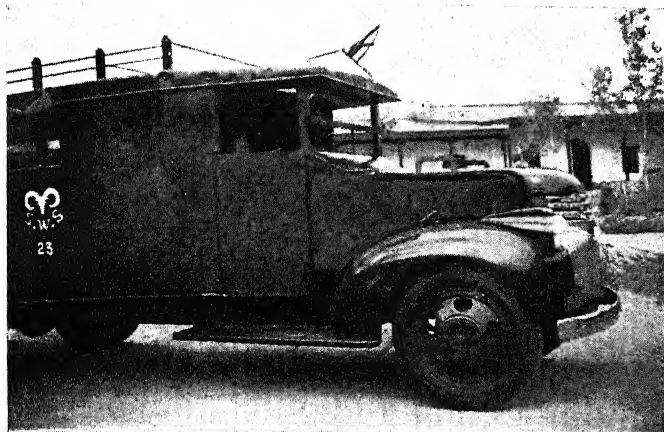
is protected to a point behind the driver's seat in a manner exactly similar to the other armoured lorries. The back of the driver's seat is armoured above his head-level, giving full protection from the rear. The remainder of the truck is open. Fitted ramps are provided for loading or unloading the gun and one of these also forms the tailboard of the lorry when on the move. There is room for the carriage of a limber as well as the gun in the lorry though in practice we never do that. The protected portion of the vehicle is fitted for ammunition in any case.

These lorries have proved very satisfactory in use. The guns are loaded, unloaded and secured in the lorry with their dragropes. The system employed makes any further tying down when on the move unnecessary. A trained crew can unload the gun illustrated (a 13-pounder), bring it into action and get off the first round in less than 90 seconds. Getting out of action and loading up takes much the same time.

The lorry is suitable as regards size, weight, etc., for carriage of 4.5 Hows., 13-pounders or any smaller gun.

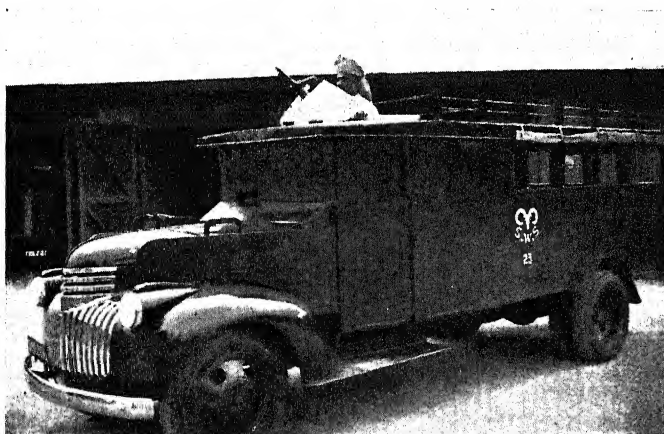


1



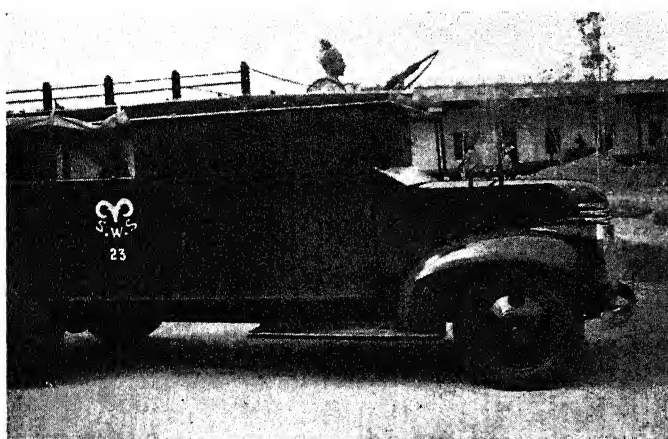
Armoured lorry open with automatic mounted on gun-ring.

2



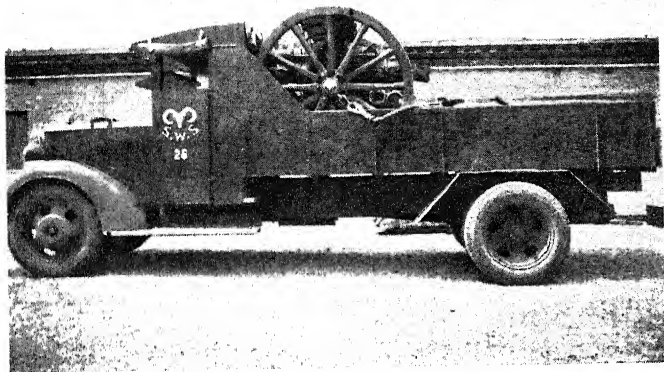
Armoured lorry closed, with automatic on gun-ring. Front half of gun-ring top in use as protective shutters.

3

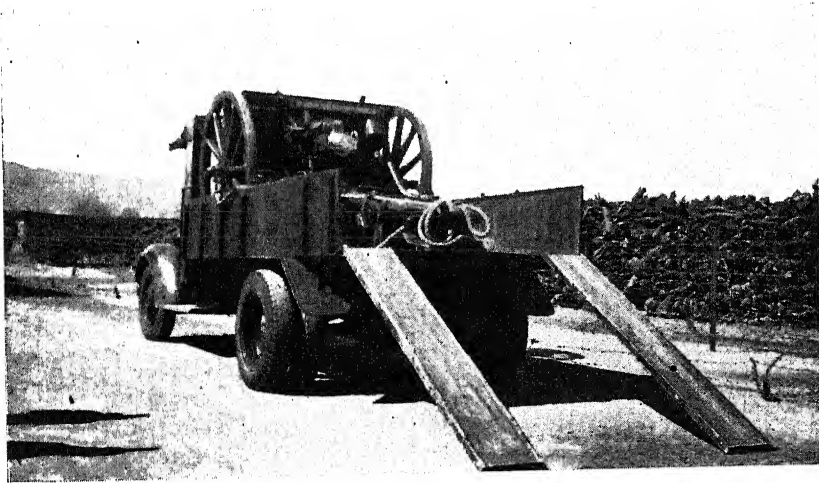


Armoured lorry closed, with automatic on gun-ring. Bullet-proof top of gun-ring, used as protection in Photo 2, has been lowered for all-round fire.

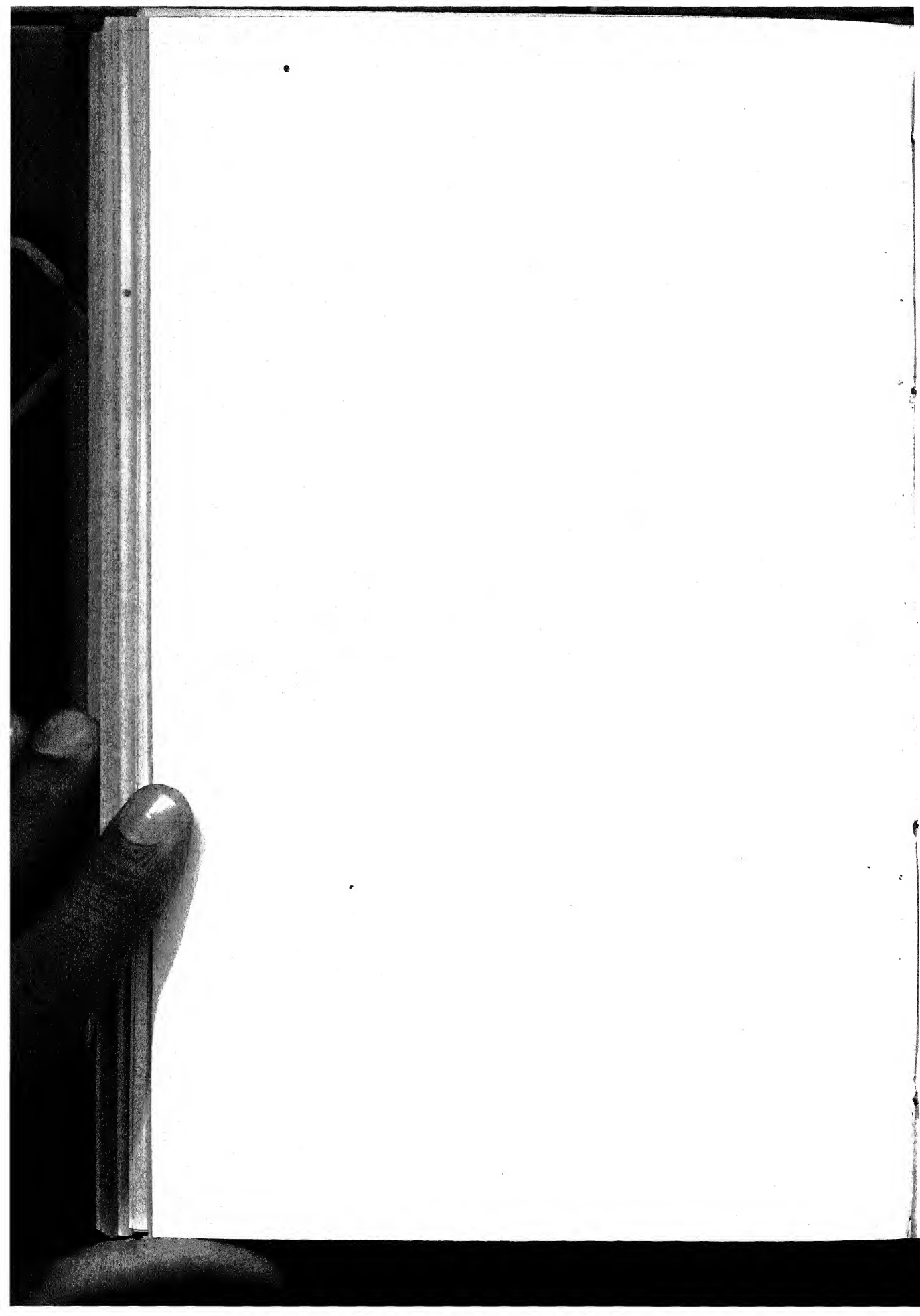




Armour-protected gun-truck.



Armour-protected gun-truck, showing loading ramps which also form tailboard of lorry.



## A SIDELIGHT ON RECRUITING

BY MAJOR E. A. HAMLYN

In view of the large numbers of officers who have entered the Indian Army from civil life, and the equally large numbers of young officers pouring in from all sources, it seems an opportune moment to explain how the recruit is transplanted from the tranquillity of his fields to the hive of activity which the modern Training Battalion has become. In this connection, it is as well to be frank and admit that, when the author went for a tour on the Recruiting Staff he had but a hazy idea as to what the actual system was.

Although the greater part of this article refers to the piping times of peace (1918—39 vintage) the remarks on the system hold good to-day except for the expansion of the organization and, as will be seen, it was only the change of system introduced in 1932 which enabled the organization to expand so rapidly and so smoothly on the outbreak of war.

A discourse, written or verbal, on the subject of recruiting threatens to bristle with comparative statistics—man-days forecasts, wastage and a host of figures reminiscent of the six-inch to one mile return submitted annually. Every effort has been made to eliminate such detail from this article.

The Indian Army List will show, even nowadays (!), where the Recruiting Officers of various districts have their central offices. These R.O.s work by districts and not for one particular regiment or group. Consequently you have one R.O. and his assistants dealing with several Training Battalions and one Training Battalion dealing with several R.O.s according to the class composition of the group it serves.

For obvious reasons, it is considered an advantage for a regiment to be represented on the Recruiting Staff of some district from which it enlists and postings of R.O.s and A.R.O.s aim at giving turn and turn alike in this respect as far as the officer situation permits.

Now it is desired to show something of the method by which recruits, other than those who present themselves on the office doorstep, are gathered in and produced before the recruiting officers for final selection. To understand the present system, it will, however, be necessary to take a fleeting glance at the pre-1932 system.



This consisted of Recruiting Parties of serving soldiers sent out by active or training battalions to work under the R.O.s' orders *in their own areas*. Sometimes newly attested recruits were included in these parties provided they were keen and happy as propaganda of the "look-what-the-Army-has-done-for-me!" type.

Indian Officers and men were also invited to bring in their relations to their training battalion for enlistment up to the requirements of the moment.

In the days of small demands, it may well be imagined how popular this system was with the Indian ranks and with what genuine sorrow and a certain amount of disgust they saw it pass.

The drawbacks will be more apparent if looked at from a 1940-41 aspect than they were in 1932 but, fortunately, some hard-hearted, far-seeing Staff Officer in the appropriate Branch saw them then.

These drawbacks fell under two major headings and a third, not quite so important or so obvious.

Firstly, the field of recruitment, even among the authorized main classes, was becoming extremely restricted and, in places, almost kept "in the family." The evils of this in war can readily be appreciated, as no scope existed for broadening the net by tapping new areas.

The second drawback was that the potentialities of ex-soldiers for recruiting had not been exploited and no reserve whatever of recruiting personnel existed. It will help in realizing the system's shortcomings if one tries to visualize sending off parties of *serving soldiers* on recruiting duty to-day!

The third evil which is not so obvious to the layman was that the men of these recruiting parties had no special "eye for a recruit"—of which more anon. They were admittedly told the bare physical standards to look for; but how dare the wretched Naik Mohamed Ali refuse to bring in the son of ex-Subadar-Major Mohamed Khan, O.B.I., etc. etc., whatever his private opinion might be? Consequently, either the recruiter had to be penalised or Government, represented by the Recruiting Officer, had to pay up to avoid hardship.

Consequently, amid dull rumblings in which Commanding Officers have even been heard to join, the system of Paid Recruiters was introduced in 1932.

The P.R.s, as they will henceforth be called, are ex-soldiers, usually pensioners. They could be taken on trial first at Rs. 10 and if subsequently worthy, made permanent at Rs. 20.

They were to be "turned over" after four years to create a reserve but it is doubtful if that order was strictly observed in the case of a really good recruiter—which is but human nature! The intention, at least, was laudable and obvious.

In addition to a knowledge of physical standards, these P.R.s soon learnt to know what is an "obviously unfit;" that is to say, to spot defects such as knock-knees, varicose veins and one or two other things for which the Recruiting Officer, without needing to consult his Medical Officer, will reject men.

They develop, in fact, the "eye for a recruit" referred to above and, after some time under the Recruiting Officer, they are paid no allowances for the "obviously unfits" they bring in for inspection.

A word as to these allowances. Government allow up to rupees two per recruit for subsistence at annas four per diem and to include train or bus fares over short distances. As it is quite impossible for the Recruiting Officer to say how many days the recruit has been maintained by the P.R., it gives the former some further hold over the latter to penalize bad results. So far from P.R.s having to feed recruits, except possibly in famine areas, the boot is probably often on the other foot!

Although these P.R.s naturally work best in their own districts and among their own classes they should be, and were, trained to work in completely different areas and to enlist classes other than their own; otherwise your parochial system might creep in again.

Naturally, P.R.s require a certain amount of keeping up to the mark, but the hold over them described above, plus the power of the sack being vested personally in the Recruiting Officer, should prove quite adequate. They are a much-maligned race as regards partiality and alleged bribery, though there may occasionally be some grain of truth in these accusations. The remedy is for the Recruiting Officer, whoever he may be, to make himself as accessible as possible on all occasions. Not so easy now, perhaps but, in many instances, there was far more smoke than fire in these accusations in peace-time as will be shown.

Recruiting Officers' tours are published some time ahead in the *Fauji Akhbar* and, on the appointed day, he arrives at some central place accompanied by his whole-time Medical Officer—possibly by train, possibly after a cross-country car trip.

Here he is met by P.R.s he put on the job of collection say 10 days previously, and by anything up to five times the number

of recruits he is prepared to enlist (peace-time, of course). If he is wise and can possibly spare the time, he will give them all the once over and look round for more. He can then sleep peacefully at night and smile at subsequent accusations that Hari Singh, son of Havildar Moti Singh, was not permitted to see the Recruiting Officer.

He will, naturally, see first the recruits he had ordered his P.R.s to bring in; but, even before this war, a system of registration for future vacancies permitted him to give all the eligible ones a chance.

After the Recruiting Officer has made his selection—and this should include some 10 per cent. more than his actual requirements—he hands them on to his Medical Officer for thorough medical inspection which usually knocks out about a maximum of 10 per cent.

It is worthy of note that, once passed by a Recruiting Medical Officer, nothing short of a Medical Board can subsequently reject a recruit as unfit. Various misunderstandings and heart-burnings have occurred through ignorance of this rule.

The Medical Officer will also inspect recruits registered for future enlistment and, if passed, they are given a ticket to report to the central office on a certain date (if known) or to report when called up. This has no legally binding force and they are free to change their minds or for mother to change their minds for them.

Actual requirements, once passed by the Medical Officer, are enrolled on the spot, given an advance of pay of rupees two and sent off to their respective training battalions on warrant, usually with a P.R. as conductor. A recruit becomes subject to the Indian Army Act and to his conditions of service once his signature or thumb-impression, together with that of his enrolling officer, have been affixed to his enrolment form. Incidentally, it is not at all a bad thing to let this fact sink home before the recruit departs for his training battalion.

The above are somewhat dry-as-dust details of routine, but a visit to the ancient battlefield of *regimental connection* may prove more entertaining.

On the introduction of the P. R. System, loud outcries arose on all sides that the Regimental Connection was bound to disappear and that it would be impossible for serving soldiers' *bhai-bands* to penetrate to the august presence of enrolling officers.

Arrangements were, accordingly, made whereby Commanding Officers could forward, monthly, to Recruiting Officers a list of such relations and friends. The Recruiting Officer wrote and ordered them to appear on fixed dates and times at places near their homes and this letter constituted, or should have constituted, a pass to see the Recruiting Officer.

Still, however, the outcry went on that poor little so-and-so, who was an exceedingly *tagra* specimen, had not been able to bribe his way past the rapacious P.R.s into the Recruiting Officer's presence. In nine cases out of ten poor little so-and-so had, in fact, been seen by the Recruiting Officer and turned down on the spot as a hopeless little weed; but, of course, he was not going to admit it!

At length, in deference to the clamour, it was decided that headquarter enlistment should be re-introduced up to 25 per cent. of outstanding demands, and everybody was happy again. Even the body-snatching recruiting staff were happy for the following reason:

Physical standards were, before the war, hard and fast—in theory, at any rate—and the Recruiting Officer had no authority to take “border-line” cases by which, curiously enough, are meant cases *under* the prescribed standard.

In practice, if the Recruiting Officer knew the Commanding Officer he was recruiting for as a broadminded and tolerant chap and if the Medical Officer agreed, he did take a certain number of border-line cases. Otherwise, to take them merely gave a handle for the subsequent rejection of a recruit who was not popular in other ways.

Now that Commanding Officers were once more empowered to enlist, they could, naturally, use their discretion as to what minor variations of standard they could permit so—to repeat—everyone was happy and the sons of ex-Jemadar this and Havildar that could have another shot at slipping past a less practised eye. Sentiment usually got them in and they probably made excellent soldiers for all the lacking half-inch.

With present recruiting figures, “doorstep” enlistment has vastly increased and this calls for still greater co-operation between Recruiting Officers and Commanding Officers of training battalions. Neither like to turn away a recruit (at his own expense) who will obviously be required in a very few months more. Despite the repeated publication of orders, *umedwars* continue to roll up at Training Battalion Headquarters for enlistment.



If taken, outstanding demands with the Recruiting Officer must, to some extent, be cancelled, causing trouble at that end.

Somebody will now leap up and say: "Why must demands be cancelled when "man-days" are washed out? ("Man-days" is the system of limitation of recruiting, which it was promised not to go into at the commencement of this article!) The answer is, at present, lack of accommodation and strict insistence by the medicos on "floor space." This is unanswerable, so we revert once more to the necessity for unlimited give and take between the recruiting authorities and those for whom they work.

Most people who have waded as far as this will now want to know what difference the war has made to the system and organization outlined above.

In principle, the system and method of recruitment remains exactly the same but the keynote, introduced by the war, is decentralization. On the outbreak of war there were on the books of the A.I.R.O. many officers of the category "recruiting" and most of these were called up as soon as the need for them could be foreseen. They are now known as Extra Assistant Recruiting Officers (E.A.R.O.s) and have branch offices stationed out in the bigger centres of the district for which the Recruiting Officer is responsible. One case in point is that of a certain Recruiting Officer who has 18 such branch offices under him! These E.A.R.O.s have, usually, authority to enrol recruits.

In addition to these there are many retired Indian Officers who were registered as Honorary Assistant Recruiting Officers. This was considered an honour and, as the first word of their title implies, they were not to come on the paid recruiting staff. They were influential in their own areas and were to act more on the propaganda side, subsequently collecting their "catch" and bringing it into port. They have no powers of enrolment.

One may well believe from the foregoing that a Recruiting Officer's life at present is not all milk and honey. Very different in fact from pre-war days, but oh! how still more different from the pre-1914 era when the Recruiting Officer disappeared into the blue for weeks on end riding on a caparisoned elephant with saddle bags full of rupees and . . . but perhaps irrelevancy is creeping in!

It is hoped that this article may have done something to show the difficulties on both sides in this occasionally vexed matter of recruitment and, thereby, to help Training Battalions and Recruiting Staffs to understand each other's problems and make allowances for them. Which is, after all, the keystone of co-operation.



## YOUR HOME WHEN YOU RETIRE

By "JOYCEY"

War or no war, this is a problem which, sooner or later, we all have to face and the sooner we begin to prepare for it the better. A little put by now each month, and invested in, say, National Savings Certificates, is not only going to help to win this war, but will make a big difference later on.

To build or to buy is the question we must first settle, "The World and his Wife," his "Wife" in particular, will certainly advise you not to build. The old threadbare adage, "Fools build, wise men buy," will be flung at your head on all sides. It seems to me by the number of houses in England that we must be a nation of fools if this is true. If you can find just what you want, just where you want it and within your means, this advice more often than not is sound, but how many of us do know just what we want?

That house, when you retire, which you have been dreaming about; you know, a large drawing-room, a cubby hole of a study, at least two decent bedrooms, Company's water, Gas, Electricity, H. & C., etc. etc., a small garden, and perhaps a tennis court if you can run to it. It all sounds so wonderful when you are thinking about it, or dreaming about it, or planning it, but it is not quite so wonderful when the time comes to look for it. House agents appear to be blessed with expansive imaginations; they will send you to see many "Desirable Gentlemen's Residences" which they think (or say they do) will suit you eminently. You will proceed with "Orders to View" and invariably find not one but a hundred snags, and the house which you would really like generally belongs to someone else who does not want to sell it, or if he does, the price is completely beyond you.

The first thing to decide is the locality in which you want to live and it is suprising the number of factors which rule the selection. Surroundings, associations, friends, cost of living, climate, all have to be considered and not the least, the servant problem. Few good servants care for the country, while in or near a town they are not so difficult to obtain. The countryside with its beauty and charm and sometimes inconvenience must be weighed against the town with its confinement and noise, yet its conveniences and resulting comforts. The "fringe" of both appears to

offer an ideal solution if it can be found, that is, the country with a large town three or four miles distant with a good motor bus service.

Having fixed the locality, the next problem is to find a site and the really serious business begins. Although one may love one's neighbour, one has not, perhaps, the same affection for his loud speaker or his noisy children or the bark of his dog. You do require shelter from the prevailing wind, particularly if you have chosen a spot near the sea. The usual services are a *sine qua non* and if you have a view, the reasonable hope that it will not be spoilt by someone building in front of you. You will find that you can't get it every way and even the best of sites will have some snag or other. The best way to go about it is to draw up a comparative statement of all possible sites shewing the advantages and disadvantages of each; this should enable you to come to a decision.

The business of purchase you will find rather complicated; you cannot buy land in the same way that you can buy a pound of tea; it is not so easy; if it were, solicitors and agents would very soon go out of business. Nor can you haggle over the price of a pound of tea, but you can and do haggle over the price of a horse, a cow, a car or a piece of land. One inquires from the agent the price asked and then makes a "firm offer," why it is called "firm" I don't know, because it is always less than one intends to give, and eventually one comes to an agreement or not. If not the whole business starts over again. Never be hurried into the purchase of land or a house; you will invariably be told that there is someone else who is also after it, and the chances are that this is not the case. The idea is to hurry you into the deal before you discover the snags.

Having reached an agreement, do not pay the agents anything; they will probably ask you to deposit 10 per cent. of the purchase money; this is not due until the "Contract" is signed. The Vendor's solicitors will forward to your solicitors a draft of conditions and stipulations in the Conveyance. The sale of most building land is subject to some conditions, generally to keep the type of house in conformity with other houses in the neighbourhood. This document would also contain particulars as to any tithe, ground rent or similar charge. Your solicitor will raise any objection which he may consider necessary in your interests and the Vendor's solicitor will make the necessary explanation.

The next step will be the signing of the Contract and with it you will be called upon to pay 10 per cent. of the agreed purchase

price as a deposit. The Contract is a binding legal document and cannot be repudiated by either party except by mutual consent. If you repudiate it you will lose the deposit and have to pay the solicitors' fees on both sides. Finally the Conveyance is prepared, signed by both parties and the land becomes yours.

All this legal business takes from about six weeks to two months and the delay is maddening. I think that if you are in a hurry it would be advisable to make the Contract subject to the Conveyance being signed within a certain time. You will be anxious to start on the erection of your house but it is only advisable to enter into arrangements with your architect subject to the Conveyance going through. You should give the employment of an architect very careful thought; some people consider him to be a luxury; certainly his employment increases the cost of your house by 6 per cent. but there is no doubt that it is worth it. He is essentially an expert; he has studied houses all his life; he knows just how much space is required for any particular purpose and just how to scheme what you want within your means; you may think that you do, but you will find that, unless you are the exception, you do not.

If you decide to cut your expense and not employ an architect, you will find yourself entirely in the hands of a builder, who may be honest. Even if he is and you have planned your house yourself and are convinced that it is just what you really want, when you come to live in it, you will find that snag after snag will make themselves only too evident. The hot-water pipe which passes through the larder; the lavatory cistern which flushes when the front door bangs and/or can be heard in the drawing-room when you are entertaining someone really important, to say nothing of doors which jam and windows which warp. I think that there is one particularly important point which applies to the planning of a small house making the necessity for the employment of an architect. It is this: in a large house the cutting down or the increasing of the size of a room by a foot or so does not make much material difference to the house as a whole; in a small house where economy of space is essential, any slight alteration very often throws out the whole plan of the house. It is only the architect who can see, judge and allow for any such alteration.

For his 6 per cent. of the total cost of the building the architect schemes the house according to your ideas, makes out an estimate of the cost, prepares detailed drawings and specifications, makes all arrangements with the builder, calls for tenders and advises which to accept, prepares the building contract, issues

certificates and generally supervises the erection of the house. Supervision includes responsibility that the work is carried out to the correct design and that the builder is using materials as described in the specification. You will find that the architect will make a small charge for "extras" and it is as well to fix this sum beforehand; this amount is for out-of-pocket expenses, visiting the site, typing and copying plans, etc.

When employing an architect there is one important point if you want to save your pocket; it is well worth while looking out for. You want the exterior of your house to look well; at the same time it is the interior in which you live, and so it is in the interior you want to spend your money. From the architect's point of view the exterior is what the general public sees, and is his advertisement; after all architects are human!

If you decide not to employ an architect, you will find yourself almost entirely in the hands of a builder and you will be well advised to make very careful enquiries about him from more than one independent source before you approach him. Builders of good standing usually are of the highest integrity but, unfortunately, there are others who are not quite of the same standard. These latter will often cut the cost to get your business and make up for it by skimping or using inferior materials.

The building contract would now be drawn up by the builder and this document contains many technical terms and descriptions which are only understood by architects and those connected with the trade. Unless you happen to be an expert you cannot know whether the articles used are up to specification, whether the concrete of your foundations, the mortar which holds your walls together and the plaster on your walls and ceilings are as specified and have been mixed in the right proportions. Nor will you find it easy to distinguish between seasoned and unseasoned wood or judge the correctness or otherwise of many other technical details.

After some six months you will become aware of them when you find that your roof leaks, rain seeps through your walls, doors and windows warp and rattle and the draught through your snow-shrunk floor boards lifts your carpets.

It is possible to protect yourself to a certain extent against the dishonest builder. In the building contract you should insist on at least 10 per cent. of the contract price being withheld until at least six months after the completion of the building. It is also advisable to have an arbitrator to settle disputes which may



arise. If you have borrowed from a Building Society, their surveyor will take an interest in the construction and might be persuaded to act as arbitrator; he will not be able, however, to give the same attention to detail as one would expect from an architect.

As regards finance, many people are convinced that they can never afford to own their own houses. Year after year they go on paying rent into the pocket of a landlord. Year after year they go on digging his garden, improving his property, sinking money, labour and care into something which is not and never will be theirs. After 20 years they have in rent more than paid for the house in which they live and have nothing to show for it, nothing to leave their children if they are fortunate enough to have any. I wonder if it is realized that a very large and increasing proportion of the working classes in England either own, or are on a fair way to owning, their homes, and this is made feasible by the many Building Societies which exist.

Let us take a concrete example. A house which you can rent for, say, £75 per annum; at the end of 20 years you will have paid £1,500 in rent, which will approximate its value. Let us suppose that you are able to put down £800 and intend to borrow £700 from the Building Society. On a 21-year mortgage you will have to pay, principal and interest, £1-1-6 per month per £100 borrowed. This means that on your £1,500 house you will be paying roughly £90 per annum, i.e., £15 a year more than if you had rented the place. The point is that the house will be yours and every spadeful of earth you turn in the garden, the cupboard you put in and the lawn on which you lavish so much care will be yours and yours alone, a really safe investment in these troublesome times.

Turning to some of the problems which will confront you in the actual planning and construction of your house, the first, of course, will be economy. There are two kinds of economy, the foolish and the sensible. Where economy is going to mean recurring expenditure later on, it is obviously foolish; so, when you build your house, keep an eye on future expenditure. For example, a tiled roof with just tiles laid on laths, looks like any other roof and costs far less than boards, felt and then tiles, but your future coal bills in vain endeavour to keep your house warm, will very soon prove how foolish your economy has been. Oak floors look very nice but they cost about double that of deal and are no economy.



Economy of space is the next point to consider and is of paramount importance. The cost of a house is worked out on its cubic contents at approximately s.1/6 to s.1/8 per cubic foot. As an example in the writer's experience, the addition of one foot to the width of a room 20 feet long would have cost an extra £30. There are many ways of economising space, the height of your rooms may be eight feet six inches or eight feet according to individual taste. The principle you ought to follow is space where you want it, that is, where you spend most of your time when you are in your house.

You spend a third of your existence in your bedroom and about one-quarter of your time in your sitting room, so these two rooms should be the best in the house. They should most certainly get the sun and the view if you have one. The sitting room should have easy access to the garden and a convenient size approximates 20 by 16 feet.

Let us examine the other rooms and see how we can economise in space. The writing room, after all, is only a place to write the odd letter in, and perhaps practise the odd hobby. A writing table, a work bench and a few cupboards are all that are necessary. A room 12 by 9 feet should be large enough. I may add that a door leading from the sitting room into the writing room is a great convenience.

The dining room essentially should be next and have easy access to the kitchen. It is not a room of the same importance as the sitting room. About 12 by 14 feet will seat six comfortably and contain the necessary furniture. An excellent labour-saving device is a service hatch with a silver-and-cutlery drawer under it opening both into the dining-room and kitchen.

Next comes the kitchen and here it is as well to remember that maids are more particular now than they used to be. If you want to keep a good maid, make her comfortable. She will have to spend her rest hours in the kitchen and if you provide her with a tiny box of a place which will be impregnated with the smells of cooking and washing up, you will very soon be servantless. Allow plenty of built-in cupboards and, if possible, the sink to be in a curtained recess. Approximately 14 by 18 feet ought to meet with your requirements but see that it has plenty of light and air.

I have little advice to offer about bedrooms except that these should be light and airy and you cannot have too many built-in cupboards; carry these right up to the ceiling to save places where dust may collect.

I now come to the other accommodation, namely garage, coal cellar, lavatories and bathroom. The garage, besides being roomy enough to take your car, must have easy access to the road. Hanging doors on an overhead rail are a vast improvement to the swinging type and the advantage of having direct access from the garage to the house is only too obvious. You would be well advised to allow rather more room than is required for the car; it is extraordinary how many odd things find a home in the garage besides the car. Coal cellars in English houses are never large enough to hold all the coal you want to store; to some extent this difficulty may be overcome by the addition of a wooden partition, with the bottom board missing, which will keep the coal stacked up. One lavatory "up" and one, plus wash-basin, "down" stairs is almost a necessity. Many people seem to me to spend far too much money on their bathrooms. Tiled floors and dados and expensive fittings all look very nice but add considerably to the total cost. A bathroom can be made to look very nice quite cheaply with linoleum and enamel paint.

Most modern houses are constructed of 11-inch cavity walls; this really means two walls with an air space between them. The advantage is that where damp may penetrate the outer wall, it cannot cross the air space and so enter the house. If money is an object, avoid building a house with an outside of cream plaster; in a very short time you will have the recurring expenditure of re-colourwashing whereas brick—of the right kind—improves in appearance with age.

Turning to domestic arrangements several very knotty problems will present themselves; first, cooking. You may have the choice of gas, electricity or coal. Having very carefully weighed up the advantages and disadvantages of all three, I am convinced that there is nothing to equal the "Heat Storage Cookers" (either Esse or Aga), now on the market, burning anthracite. They cannot be beaten for convenience, economy or cleanliness. The fuel consumption at 80s. per ton approximates at 4d. per day. They never go out and require only the minimum of attention. The outlay, however, is heavy and they do not heat your domestic supply of water.

Hot water for domestic purposes and for central heating presents a very grave problem. Some people seem to think that these two can be provided from one boiler and that this arrangement is an economy. The economy is doubtful and the arrangement in practice is, more often than not, unsatisfactory. Either the bath water is not hot enough or the radiators become so hot that your

house is uncomfortable. If you have two separate systems, you can shut off the central heating during the summer months and only burn sufficient coal for the domestic supply. If, however, you have one boiler to serve both purposes, you may shut off the central heating during the summer months but I doubt very much if the fire-box would consume less fuel. These remarks apply more to a complete central heating system which is an expensive outlay. Economies, however, can be made, and if you are content with only one large radiator in the hall, which is where the cold air gets into any house, I should think that it could very easily be run from the domestic supply boiler. It is a practical proposition to have your central heating run from a boiler in the dining room, thus using the heat from the boiler fire which would otherwise be wasted.

As regards the domestic supply, if you have chosen a hard-water district to settle in, it is an economy to install "Indirect Heating" to avoid having your pipes and boiler furred up. "Indirect Heating" means that the water in the kitchen boiler circulates through a coil in the hot-water tank and then returns to the boiler; it is thus used over and over again. In "Direct Heating" there is no coil and the water flows from the "Main" into the boiler and so to the hot-water tank, and a deposit in your boiler and pipes will take place. "Indirect Heating" is somewhat more expensive in outlay but pays in a hard-water district.

There are many ways in which economy and labour-saving may be introduced: hot and cold water in every bedroom, including the maid's, is practically a necessity: flush oak doors which never have to be painted: scientifically constructed fireplaces which do economise fuel: oxidized fittings such as taps and door handles which do not require polishing. Avoid the white door-step which has to be scrubbed and looks as if it had not been touched 10 minutes later.

Finally, no house yet built was ever built according to plan; there are always some small alterations or modifications which only become apparent as the building progresses. These modifications cost money; they are often unavoidable, so always keep about £50 in reserve over and above your initial outlay.

## CROCODILE SHOOTING

BY "PHEON"

Crocodile (*magar*) shooting, certainly in Northern India, is good exercise that requires some skill in stalking and accuracy in rifle shooting. It is a cheap sport that is available near most large stations and has the added advantage of yielding a useful trophy. There is no close season and no special licence (or permit) is necessary.

There appears to be a widespread belief that *magar* shooting is too easy or not sporting. This opinion is, however, normally voiced by individuals who have never done any *magar* shooting themselves. If straightforward stalking on the banks of one of the large rivers of Northern India is tried, it will be found that it is arduous work that requires fitness and skill if the actual shot is to be effective.

The following notes are elementary but, as there is no text-book on the lowly sport of *magar* shooting, they may be of use to those who are new to the game.

*The Crocodile.*—Two types of crocodile are met within Indian limits—the Asiatic Crocodile and the *gharial*. The Asiatic Crocodile has a blunt nose and is addicted to man-eating; it differs slightly in structure from the African Crocodile and the American Alligator. Its skin is said to be inferior for tanning purposes to that of the *gharial*. The *gharial* has a long, beak-like nose; an adult male has a large knob on the top side of the tip of the nose. It lives on fish and is reputed to be harmless to man but it will eat bodies. Rarely, if ever, are the two varieties of *magar* found in the same stretch of river. Both kinds may be called *magar* or *sus* but the name *magar* is properly applicable to the blunt-nosed variety and *sus* to the porpoise. The *gharial* is generally called *magar-machh* but may be called *gharial* or *nak*. Local names vary but generally *magar* is understood everywhere. A *magar* of 3 feet 6 inches long is shootable and at that size appears to bask regularly; both varieties grow to over 20 feet long. A large *magar*, one of over 15 feet in length, is old and normally very wary; it is more difficult to shoot a large than a small *magar* in spite of the larger aiming mark.



*Where to find Magar.*—It is most unusual to come across an Indian town of any size that is not on a river. The average Indian river, if it has exposed sand banks or spits that are a little distance from traffic, will normally hold basking *magar*. *Magar* may exist in canals and in river gorges but it is not possible to shoot them in such places. If *magar* are frequently shot at, they become very shy of human beings and boats; so, near a large station, it will probably pay one to avoid the nearest basking places. In certain parts of the country *magar* are found in narrow rivers, creeks and sometimes ponds which have vegetation up to the water's edge. In such places it is easy to shoot *magar* and the chief skill required is that of discovering good *magar* localities and in keeping the knowledge secret.

*Magar* normally bask just clear of the water-line. On emerging the head is pointed inshore but some wary *magar* turn round and face the water before settling down. The basking spot, which will change with the height of the water, must be near deep water and possess a shelving approach. *Magar* avoid banks of over a few inches in height and banks which have to be approached through a stretch of shallow water. The basking place is normally at least two hundred yards away from any spot frequented by human beings.

*When to find Magar.*—All through the year, except on overcast or rainy days or during floods, *magar* emerge from the water and bask on the banks. In the cold weather the basking time is, roughly, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. In the hot weather *magar* bask in the morning and evening; during the hottest part of the day they return into the water, though they may lie near the bank in the shallows. The exact times, of course, vary but during May and June in Northern India *magar* may bask from 6-30 a.m. to 10 a.m. and again from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Towards the end of a basking period, if disturbed, a *magar* will, in all probability, submerge and refuse to come out again. In the middle of a basking period a *magar*, if disturbed, will generally emerge again, often at the same spot, after an interval of about half an hour. A large *magar* is more easily disturbed and spends longer in the water, after being disturbed, than a small *magar*.

*The Shot.*—It is most unusual to collect a wounded *magar*; they lie so close to the water that a small flick of the head or tail will enable them to roll back into the river. Even if shot in the heart the *magar* may well be able to return to the water. A wounded *magar* does not escape, for the blood from the wound attracts fish which harry it to death, but the sportsman does not



collect the trophy and has the distress of knowing that his inaccurate shooting has caused unnecessary suffering. The only sure way of shooting *magar* is to break the spine. If the spine is broken the *magar* is paralysed and dies where it lies. Sometimes the head or tail will jerk into an upright position and sometimes a *magar* paralysed forward may be able to move its tail, but normally it does not move. The best aiming mark to use is the neck, between the eye and the shoulder. The area, over which a bullet is sure to be effective, will not be more than 12 inches broad and about three inches up and down. As the *magar*, when basking, lies with its neck flat on the ground, this is a difficult shot. Only the most expert marksman can expect to hit this mark at distances over 100 yards and, as a general rule, the average shot should not fire at *magar* unless he can approach to less than 100 yards. If a *magar*, hit in the neck, can move its tail, it should be given a second shot just behind the rear legs at the base of the tail. A wounded *magar*, worried by fish, frequently comes out again but generally downstream of its original basking place.

*The Method.*—There are three principal methods of shooting *magar*; they are:

1. *The Stalk (The Pukka Sahib).*—Where there are uncovered sand or mud banks beside a river, on which *magar* bask, the most sporting and satisfactory method is to stalk. It is immaterial whether the basking spot is approached by boat, motor or foot. As basking places vary with the height of the water, a reconnaissance should be carried out a day or two before the actual shoot.

By means of the oblique approach march, as used in black buck shooting, it will often be found possible to get within 200 yards of *magar*, even when walking upright. It will, however, not be possible to get within 100 yards of *magar* unless stalking is resorted to. There are normally folds in the banks which can be used in the early stages of the stalk. Towards the end of the stalk it will, in almost every case, be found that the *magar* is lying below the stalker, separated from him by over 100 yards of sloping sand or mud. Only young and unwary *magar* lie near broken ground or cover. It will be found that it is necessary to crawl at least 50 yards before a safe shot can be taken. Before the broken ground is vacated and the sportsman is finally committed to the stalk, he should study the ground carefully. It is highly probable that the stalk can be made on a line on which the *magar* can only see with one eye and it may well be possible to advance some of

the way by keeping a small bush, plant or hummock in line with the *magar's* eye. The ground will be either wet mud or soft, powdery sand from which the rifle bolt should be kept clear. One way of achieving this is to crawl with the rifle butt rested across one ankle. Whatever method of stalking is adopted it is certain that it will be fatiguing and it will be found that, before the shot can be taken, it is necessary to rest and regain breath. The shot must be taken in the lying position but it will often be found possible to use one's topee as a rifle rest.

Binoculars are very useful during the early stages of the stalk but are a nuisance to carry; if carried in the shorts or slacks pocket they are get-at-able without being too great a hindrance. The shot should be the signal for a coolie or boat to approach; as, however, it will take some minutes for anyone to reach the *magar*, it may be desirable for the sportsman to get the *magar* farther away from the water. This is a rather terrifying task but if the *magar* is paralysed forward and is grasped firmly by the tail, is not very difficult with small *magar*. In the case of large *magar* it is wiser to wait for the coolies to arrive. Before putting the *magar* into a boat a piece of rope should be tied round its jaws. In lifting the *magar* into the boat care should be taken not to scratch the soft belly skin on a nail or splinter.

SITTING-UP (THE EDGAR WALLACE).—The most certain method of shooting *magar* is to sit up for them. That is, a hide is prepared and the sportsman gets into position before the *magar* are due to emerge to bask. To be certain that the hide will be in the correct position, it is essential that a reconnaissance be carried out one or two days before the shoot; if the water level changes, the hide may become useless. It is best to construct the hide on an island and not on the bank, where fishermen or other passers-by may frighten the *magar* at a critical moment. A few days before the shoot the sportsman should go out with a boat, a digging implement and a pair of binoculars. Having found an island where *magar* are basking he should land and supervise the construction of a hide at a reasonable distance, say 75 yards, from the positions where the *magar* were basking when the boat approached. Unless the surface is soft mud it is best to dig a pit. If the surface is soft mud, a hide of grass, reeds or sticks must be constructed and, on the day of the shoot, boards should be taken to lie on. In an island hide *magar* may emerge from any quarter so the cover must be all-round. With the pit hide a low parapet should be constructed and the balance of the excavated sand spread out. If the hide has altered the contour of the island,

it should not be used for at least one day, to allow the *magar* time to get used to it.

On the day of the shoot the sportsman should aim to be in position in the hide at least half an hour before the *magar* are due to bask. The boat should be sent away several hundred yards and up-stream, so it can come quickly if required, and a call signal must be explained to the boatmen. The sportsman should then make himself comfortable in the hide, rest his rifle on top of the parapet and read for at least 45 minutes before he looks over the top of the hide. An Edgar Wallace is best for this and, if it is a good one and the sportsman does not look over for an hour and a half, so much the better. This point is important for, before coming out of the water, *magar* normally cruise about for several minutes with only their eyes above water and, if at all suspicious, come up the bank by stages. Half an hour may elapse between the time a *magar's* eyes are seen and the time he finally settles down on the bank. If the sportsman keeps down during this period he will avoid scaring the *magar* and will have an easy shot at an unsuspecting *magar*. If the *magar* is killed outright the sportsman should give the boat-call signal. If the *magar* has been missed or wounded, the sportsman can wait for it to come out again. If the *magar* has not seen anything but has only been frightened by the noise of the shot it will, in all probability, come back to the same spot within half an hour.

THE BOAT (THE GAY LOTHARIO).—The most comfortable way of shooting *magar* is from a boat. The method has many advantages. Cushions, food, beer, books and girl friends can be taken in reason. The boat can collect the sportsman from his car at roadhead and return him to it. The boat should be as small as possible and should have a screen of grass at the bows. Binoculars should be used to sweep the river ahead—a boatman can do this if required—and the boat allowed to drift downstream. When *magar* are seen the boatmen should lie down in the stern and steer the boat towards the *magar* with an oar. The sportsman should lie down, with rifle at ready, in the bows and the girl friends should recline on a li-lo in the bottom of the boat. When the *magar* gets suspicious, raises its head, rises to its feet or turns round, the sportsman should fire. It should be possible to get to within 150 yards of the *magar* and if the boat does not rock too much, with luck, the *magar* may be collected. While this is the most pleasant method of *magar* shooting, it is unfortunately the one least likely to yield result.

THE SPEED-BOAT (THE MAHARAJAH).—The speed-boat method can hardly be classified as a way of shooting *magar* as the writer knows of no case where it has yielded a trophy. Still it is, no doubt, jolly good fun and unlikely to hurt anyone, including the *magar*. The main essential is to procure a fast motor-boat, preferably one with a large ice-chest. The speed-boat is then filled with sportsmen, beer, girl friends and rifles to taste. Large stretches of water are covered at a high speed and rapid, concentrated fire is opened on all *magar* seen, normally at a range of about 300 yards. As speed-boats are rare on Indian rivers, few are able to enjoy this exotic sport. A few years ago the sons of a well-known shopkeeper in Dera Ismail Khan were keen exponents of the method.

*Equipment.*—No special equipment is necessary for *magar* shooting. Almost any rifle, from a high velocity .22 upwards, is effective. There is certainly no need to use a large bore; something between .275 and .318 is probably the best bore to use. Binoculars are most useful and a telescopic sight an advantage. Dark glasses are an essential, for *magar* only bask on bright days and the glare off the water and the sand is considerable. If stalking is contemplated, slacks are better than shorts, as they give more protection against ooze and dust. White or brightly coloured clothes should be avoided.

*Skinning.*—Small *magar* may be manhandled back to the car, tied on the luggage carrier and taken home to be skinned at leisure but large *magar* must be skinned on the spot. Unless a *mochi*, complete with knives, is taken on the expedition, trouble may be experienced. It may be found that none of the boatmen know how to skin, or that they have no knives, or that they refuse to touch the *magar*. It is, therefore, advisable for the sportsman to include knives in his kit and for him to have some knowledge of skinning, so he can, at least, supervise the removal of the skin. Rowland Ward, Van Ingen and the North-West Tannery, Cawnpore, all publish booklets on skinning which mention *magar*. The first cut should be made just behind one of the eyes and continued all round the body along the lower edge of the top plate armour. Everything below this may be taken off, including the piece below the jaw, the tail aft of the vent and the leg skin. It will be found that the tanners will be unable to use all the odd corners but it is better to take off too much than too little. The skin must be scraped clean of all flesh and fat and covered thickly with salt. Liquid should be drained off daily for two or three



days, and fresh salt applied. The skin will then be found to be dry and it can be rolled up in sacking and sent to the tanners. Preservatives other than salt, such as "Atlas," may be used but salt is effective, cheap and easy to obtain.

*The Trophy.*—If it is desired to retain some memento of a special shoot it is possible to have the head of the *magar* mounted on a shield but the average person contents himself with having some useful article made up from the skin. *Magar* skin can be made up into almost any article from travelling trunks to card cases. Certain articles, like golf bags and large suit-cases, are extremely heavy but make very handsome presents.

*Conclusion.*—*Magar* shooting, though it cannot be compared to hill or dangerous game shooting, is pleasant sport. It can be indulged in at almost any time of the year all over India, requires little *bandobast* and, if the stalking method is used, gives scope for skill and cunning.



**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**  
**"THOSE ILL-STARRED HORNS"**

DEAR SIR,

R. G. has now confused the issue in our poor Duffer's mind.

Duffer had made himself as humanly secure as he could have by first destroying his enemy. In fact, he had really taken no risks at all for he had at last realized that "Surprise is the Salt that Savours Battle," and had applied the Salt.

Duffer did not like R.G.'s plan of taking mules out at night and thinks they all deserved to be eaten by the old salts of tigers who were lying up for them.

Yours etc.,  
JOHN HELLAND.

## REVIEWS

### THE ROAD TO BORDEAUX

BY C. DENIS FREEMAN AND DOUGLAS COOPER

(Cresset Press, 8/6d.)

Of the many books written and yet to be written on the fall of France, this will be among those remembered even when, as its authors believe, she will have risen again. Here is the story of two English civilians, living in Paris, who enlisted as ambulance drivers on the eve of the battle behind the Marne. They soon found themselves near Soissons, and from there were swept back in the general retreat—evacuating wounded under hard conditions. The chapters that follow describe bombing raids, burning towns, a refugee population—scenes all witnessed at first hand during that June a year ago. The book is written in diary-form; its style graphic, direct—the essence of spontaneity. As is set forth in the dedication: "We did not enlist in the French army for the sake of writing our memories. . . . But have been impelled to tell our story . . . when we realized that grave injustice was being done to the French people and to the French army. So many were being made to pay for the faults of so few." As witnesses of the fortitude of the French soldier, they felt it their duty to recount what they had themselves seen and heard.

As the late Sir Hugh Walpole advised, when reviewing this book in the English press, the chapter called "Panic" should be brought within the reach of a wider public—deserves indeed to be republished as a separate pamphlet. In such a form it would be of great value and interest to this country particularly, for its hundred pages tell quite simply what can happen when a whole countryside moves without orders under the stresses of rumour and ignorance.

New York in May was showing a film of the penetration of Germany's tanks into France. As might be expected, there were no scenes of bloodshed, none of the dead or wounded. That is one face of the medal: "The Road to Bordeaux" provides the other.

A. G. B.

## LIES AS ALLIES OR HITLER AT WAR

BY VISCOUNT MAUGHAM

(Oxford University Press, 6d.)

This recent addition to the Oxford University Press Pamphlet Series is a specially useful and valuable one: here Lord Maugham sets out clearly and as he says, unpretentiously, the record of Hitler's lies. As the foreword says, while most people are aware that the declaration of war was preceded by a spate of lies, few realize the extent and quality of such mendacity. This little book is more than an enlightenment: it is the indictment by a lawyer, who until recently was Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, of a means of attack which the German Chancellor has reduced to a science. The deliberate character of this policy and its justification in view of the (in Hitler's opinion) low mental level of the multitude to be deceived, is fully revealed in *Mein Kampf* itself. The author quotes chapter and verse in support of many instances. In the flow of more recent events, these are interesting reminders. The tabulated extracts from broadcast news, which are contrasted side by side, bring home once more the fantastic lengths to which the German propaganda machine has dared to go. Lord Maugham gives us both fact and fiction; his pamphlet is a useful weapon with which to convince neutrals and sceptics. It is to be hoped that the distinguished author may add further volumes under this title so that German perversion and distortion of the truth may continue to be refuted. For, as we read on the last page of the present work, Hitler "has imprisoned the bodies of countless men; the minds of all he seeks to put in chains."

A. G. B.

## EDITORIAL

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"The President of the United States and the Prime Minister, Premier and President Mr. Churchill, representing His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, being met together, deem it right to make known certain common principles in the national policies of their respective countries on which they base their hopes for a better future for the world . . ."

These words looked strange upon the printed page because at the moment we read them the wireless was speaking with another voice. "Deutschland, Deutschland Uber Alles," a noble tune now fallen on evil days, was sung in tones which were vulpine. The moment thus presented three voices—those of the leaders of two great countries and that of a country great indeed but now become the enemy of the human race because of a flaw in its nature and through systematic perversion. Then, from the distance of 23 years, memory recalled a fourth voice—that of President Wilson enunciating his message to Congress on 8th January, 1918—the famous Fourteen Points.

Little remains to be said about the meeting of Premier and President at sea—newspapers and wireless commentators have said it nearly all. One or two allusions may perhaps be made. President Wilson's fourteen points formed a uni-lateral declaration, and in clauses VI—VIII were a grievously pedantic outline of the shape of things to come. It was not until October 1918, that the President spoke in language to be understood by a world at war. Then in sombre and memorable words he called attention to "one of the terms of peace which the German Government has now accepted. . . . The destruction of every arbitrary power anywhere that can separately, secretly, and of its single choice, disturb the peace of the world; or if it cannot be presently destroyed, at the least its reduction to virtual impotency. The power which has hitherto controlled the German nation is of the sort here described. It is within the choice of the German nation to alter it. . . . It is indispensable that the governments associated against Germany should know beyond a peradventure with whom they are dealing."

These words were uttered after four years of war, and too late. It is our good fortune that in the second year of this war Premier and President have spoken plainly and in time. "Sixth,

after the final destruction of Nazi tyranny, they hope to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries and which will afford assurance that all men in all lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want. . . . Eighth, they believe that all nations of the world for realistic as well as spiritual reasons must come to the abandonment of the use of force. Since no future peace can be maintained if land, sea or air armaments continue to be employed by nations which threaten or may threaten aggression outside their frontiers, they believe, pending the establishment of a wide and permanent system of general security, that disarmament of such nations is essential."

In these words is the charter of our future endeavours.

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We have now completed two years of war, and it is interesting to look back across a quarter of a century  
**Two Years of War** to the closing months of 1916, to compare the state of a world at war then and now.

At the end of 1916 Germany and her friends seemed to be enjoying a winter sunshine of success. During the year the military fortunes of the Allies had varied; many great enterprises had been undertaken but few had succeeded.

In January the curtain fell upon the failure and the glory of Gallipoli. In midsummer began the great Somme battle which was to rage for the next four months and result in mounting casualties and sinking hopes. By the winter Jutland was still being discussed, and it must be remembered that in Holland the news of this battle had been announced as the unimaginable thing that had come to pass—an English defeat upon the sea. It was also among the causes of the Russian revolution of March 1917. In September there began the battle of the Ancre, and this month saw also the first use or misuse of tanks. Those weapons, which were ultimately to become the very sword of deliverance, nearly died at birth in mud and ridicule.

The solitary beacon of a shadowed year was the tremendous defence of Verdun—a feat of arms which must always remain one of the glories of France. Even to-day there is a peculiar thrill in rehearsing some of the names of that astonishing struggle: Driant and his Chasseurs; Douanmont; Vaux; the "Mort Homme" ridge. The pride of great exploits attends these names and they are worthy of remembrance—the more so because the nature of their



achievements ran most counter to the ordinary stream of French national temperament.

1916 saw also in England a change both in government and the supreme command. In Germany Hindenburg and Ludendorff became the Chiefs of the German General Staff—two eminent German soldiers who appeared but two months after a great British soldier left the scene. For in June of this year Kitchener died at sea.

Finally, with the Rumanian catastrophe was completed the tale of the unrelieved failure of the Entente in the Balkans.

It may be thought that this picture of 1916 has been painted in colours which are too gloomy. At this distance in time it is hard to judge. We know now the strains which were developing in the German machine, but this knowledge must have been limited to a few at the time. It is in these strains and symptoms of weakness that the most valuable comparisons between the Powers at these times lie. Two only will be made. First, we know now that as a result of the Somme and Verdun there began the deterioration of the German Army from which it was never to recover. It was Ludendorff who then actually said that the German Army was seriously exhausted. Secondly, in 1916 Germany made proposals for peace. But his proposal and the peace note first forwarded by the U.S.A. were alike rejected by the Entente. This was a notable sign of Allied determination to win a decisive victory.

It is from this point that we leap forward 25 years to the present day. The German Reich after two years of war has made no peace move, though rumours have been numerous. America has put forward no peace note to the belligerent Powers. On the contrary, the Prime Minister of England and the President of the United States have made a very clear pronouncement of the aims and intentions of the sane and free nations of the world. Hitler and Nazism are to be overthrown and measures are to be taken to ensure that neither will rise again. The clarity and the certainty of this pronouncement brings to us, during the closing months of 1941, a clearer hope and a steadier determination than could be given 25 years ago.

We must consider what we know of the German Army. This great war machine presents, to all appearances, an aspect of undiminished efficiency and power. The morale of its soldiers has been heightened by success, and we may assume in them a continued and fanatical devotion to the Führer. One quality however

has not been proved in the German Army, nor need we assume it: this is a capacity to take punishment. So far, when the German Army has met British forces in France, Libya, Norway, Crete or Greece, it has been heavily mauled. The effect however has been trifling when contrasted with the general tide of success. It has now fallen to the Russians to administer to German forces the first large-scale punishment which they have been called upon to suffer. It remains to be seen how Nazi morale will stand this test. It is significant that German training has aimed at a high standard of endurance of self-inflicted hardships and privations. This method, one may surmise, has been carried beyond the bounds of psychological sanity; there is in it an element of hysteria. This element, coupled with mental force-feeding of "race superiority," is a poor preparation for those situations which strip from a man all the accretions of education and conditioning, and leave him only with a free man's determination not to be struck down by the brute bludgeonings of circumstance. It is here that Nazi morale will fail. It is now that German leaders, as did Ludendorff in 1916, may be beginning to feel the first cold onset of doubt.

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A valuable article in the July number of this Journal broke new ground in dealing with the relation of the **Combined Warfare** three services—land, sea and air—in the operations of war. The article led up to its most interesting idea in the concluding paragraph. This was the suggestion of a new mental point of departure in considering the operations of the three services by thinking of them in terms of a new phrase—"Combined Warfare."

A phrase may be a catchword deceiving us into thinking that we have understood and so absolving us from further thought. It may, on the other hand, be the beginning of understanding and the focus of new thought. The phrase "Combined Warfare" belongs to the last category.

"Combined Warfare" is everybody's business and not that only of those who are charged with the higher direction of war. A natural reaction of the "man-in-the-street" soldier (for example) is: "I have my job. If the Navy or the Air Force get mixed up in it—very well. Let them come along at the right time; do their jobs; and thus help me with mine." This is a faulty reaction, for it indicates thinking in watertight compartments. It is the same type of thinking as that which, before war brought reality in its

train, divorced land warfare from air warfare. The airman, hostile or friendly, is now as real a figure to the soldier of one arm of the service as his comrade of another. It is time that this knowledge and understanding should apply to the sailor also.

It is a platitude that great things grow from small. The intimate co-operation between the Services implied in the phrase "combined warfare" demands a mutual knowledge of each other's work by the smallest sub-units of each service. To employ a simile—we are all players in the same team but our positions differ; it is therefore our duty to understand something of each other's places.

The same thought can be expressed in somewhat more generalised terms. We should now think of warfare as a whole, and of the three Services as the three arms necessary to its execution. Once this is grasped we have made a step forward, and the idea remains with us whether we think in terms of the largest forces possible or of their smallest sub-units. To think thus is not to indulge in doctrinaire speculation. A glance through an Atlas should convince anyone that the defeat of Germany will not be brought about other than by the waging of combined warfare. The terms "sea power," "air power," "land power" are now out of date. We should think of ourselves in terms of military power embracing all three.

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People have been burned for their opinions, but very few have died of their ideas. It is therefore all the stranger that ideas are so hard to come by, so diffidently put forward when found, and treated with such general suspicion by their judges.

These sentences are not the beginning of an essay upon ideas: they are an attempt to call attention to a matter of great importance to-day. Ideas form a war-time industry, and one which is not working at war-pressure. There are of course qualifications to this statement. A war inevitably doubles the output of idiot ideas because it harnesses the energies of the woolly-witted, the day-dreamers and the insane, into a mill-race of imbecile suggestion. Death-rays, weapons which will not work, ingeniously contrived bombs which will not explode, vehicles which will not travel—ideas for these contrivances are put forward in plenty. Hard commonsense on the other hand—that faculty which produced the safety-pin and the corkscrew—is pitifully lacking.

One can overpraise and follow too slavishly the ideas of our enemies, the Germans. On the other hand they have had many efficient ideas and have pursued them with a tenacity of purpose unknown to us. Here are a few examples.

The Fifth Column, though an unsavoury weapon, is admirably effective in certain circumstances. It was in origin a Greek idea—everyone has heard of the Trojan horse or the carefully nurtured Opposition in the Greek city states. It fell to Germany to perfect this ancient idea over the last seven years. Again, the German General Staff advanced some way towards the solution of the problem of supporting armoured forces by their use of dive-bombers—a solution which British military opinion failed to consider, preferring to adhere to the orthodox employment of artillery. Finally, in their use of mortars and heavy infantry guns the Germans found—and developed—a supremely effective idea of the hairpin variety.

These slightly petulant sentences nevertheless ask the reader to absolve them from the sin of petulance. Their aim is simply to urge the production of simple ideas by those who are in touch with daily realities. A major part in the winning of this war can be played by the soldier who forgets the baton in his knapsack and remembers—and pursues—the hairpin idea in his brain.

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"The Scriptures say: put not your trust in Princes," wrote a certain Colonel Trant from a Peninsula battle-field, "but I say, put not your trust in a damn-able militia." The attitude of the professional soldier to the guerilla has seldom been more picturesquely described. The attitude has survived many wars and is based on many very reasonable grounds. Nevertheless one may well think that the time has now come for professional soldiers to take a wider view, and to think seriously of how to use the art of the guerilla as one of the weapons of war.

Germany now holds down most of Europe. Sooner or later the day will come when Europe will be liberated. That liberation means the employment of forces in land operations. In whatever country these operations may be conducted the guerilla will be a valuable ally—if properly used. It is necessary then that we should now devote some thought to the conduct of this form of war.



The text-books on the subject are few. It is perhaps fortunate that, unlike most text-books, they are also entertaining. Mr. C. S. Forester's novels "The Gun" and "Death to the French" are excellent manuals of guerilla warfare, while T. E. Lawrence's "Seven Pillars of Wisdom" is a classic history of this form of war.

The guerilla is an extremely delicate weapon, because intensely individual. His outlook is narrow, his sympathies local, his morale volatile. He is a creature of maddening paradoxes, capable of intense exertion and long endurance for apparently no reason at all, and likely to sink into apathy and inertia when the soundest military reasons exist for precisely the opposite behaviour.

As far as may be deduced the plans of the greatest guerilla leaders (or should one say users of guerilla forces) have been based on three things. These are extreme opportunism, the care for supply which makes opportunism possible, and lastly human understanding. The formula is a simple one and yet, like most things in war, extremely difficult to apply.

The best fields for its application are at the moment somewhat hard to foresee. Guerilla forces in the past have usually been allotted a harassing role, but their operations have on very few occasions only been combined with the positive offensives of regular forces. This may have been because warfare to the present date has been linear in nature and slow moving. With the advent of "area" warfare and an immense increase in speed, a fresh field may be opening for the operations of guerillas. It is this. Armoured formations, supported by aircraft, are the most powerful weapons of modern war. No one however has yet satisfactorily solved the problem of the ground support of armoured forces. The guerilla may provide the solution.

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In one of "Ole Luke Oie's" admirably imaginative stories there is an excellent description of the Commander who went fishing, and whose staff informed him from hour to hour of those happenings which he had foreseen. In Xenophon's "Cyropaedia"—a sound text-book by any standards for the training of leaders—the place which the author considered fitting for sport in war is pleasantly described. Xenophon, it must be remembered, was no paper soldier. Throughout one of the most arduous and exhausting marches that history has recorded, 10,000 men rested securely upon this man's calmness and courage.

The Duke of Wellington was a man least apt to sentimentalize upon sport—or any subject—among all men who have



lived. He was not even particularly expert in certain field sports, for we can still hear Lady Shelley's remark to an aged and unlucky cottager: "My good woman, this ought to be the proudest moment of your life. You have had the distinction of being shot by the great Duke of Wellington." None-the-less Wellington admitted the place of sport in war, and his hounds added an air of England to many Peninsula mornings.

Lever has left us a lively picture of one of those mornings seen through the eyes of "Charles O'Malley—the Irish Dragoon." "Here the shell-jacket of a heavy Dragoon was seen storming the fence of a vine-yard. There the dark green of a rifleman was going the pace over the plain. The unsportsmanlike figure of a staff officer might be observed emerging from a drain. . . ." Only in the last sentence can we suspect Lever of a certain bias.

The place of sport in war, when Britain goes to war, is well authenticated and it would be a pity if it were not so. In Nazi Germany and in fallen France sport has become a Department of Government. This indicates populations so conditioned and schooled that even recreation must be cut to the pattern of the Leader's will. Troops, drawn from such people, cannot follow a dribbled football into an attack. Neither can they meet bad days with a joke. They are neither sane nor free, and freedom and sanity under discipline are the surest signs of that morale which will be one of the most potent factors in winning us this war.

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War is admitted to play havoc with Dress Regulations **Of Military Head-** because the advent of two or three prescribed **dresses** forms of battle-dress calm the passions which in peace rage over gimp and lace, lancer braid, buttons half-round or ball—the whole intricate underworld of military millinery. Nevertheless, one item of uniform remains diverse in shape and of every colour of the spectrum. It is the headdress. War-time regulations indeed deal tenderly with the soldier's head and allow him to place upon it well-nigh anything he pleases. The forage cap, the field service cap, the pith helmet, the steel helmet, the *safa*—here or there all may be seen. The armoured vehicle has been responsible for the addition of the crash helmet to this wide range of headgear, and in certain theatres of war the Gurkha hat graces other than Gurkha heads. The issues involved are not important, and indeed tradition is on the side of a certain breadth of outlook in the matter. The inspection reports of units in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century reveal a pleasant eclecticism in the matter of headgear; and Sir Thomas Picton, one of the sternest of British Generals, died on the field of Waterloo as he had lived through numerous other battles—in his top hat.

## NAZISM AND COMMUNISM

### A COMPARISON AND A CONTRAST

BY PERCIVAL SPEAR

For sixteen years the world was taught by Adolf Hitler, and Germany complacently mimed his lesson, that Communism and Nazism were two opposites, as far removed as the east from the west, as heaven from hell, and as different as light from darkness. For two years Dr. Goebbels trotting at the heels of his master, put it out that Communism was not so bad after all, and all good Nazis hoped it might be true. Now once more the Russians are savages, and Germany the guardians of civilisation.

In fact, one system has borrowed from the other, and both have borrowed from other systems. A study of the superficial resemblances is a useful introduction to an analysis of their differences.

The first common feature which strikes the observer is the concept of totalitarianism. Both systems claim the total control of life and all its activities by authority. Both try to control the expression of opinion by the censorship of press and letters, thought by propaganda, and action by the secret police. Both worship the great god propaganda and the Gestapo balances the Ogpu. In both systems, the individual is the servant of the state, not its master, and exists for its greater glory.

Both systems have relied upon violence to seize authority and terror to maintain it. The Bolsheviks seized power by violence, dispersed the Constituent Assembly democratically elected, and waged a long civil war to establish their position.

This they have maintained with the assistance of the powerful disciplinary force of the Ogpu and Cheka.

The Nazis engaged in street warfare while climbing to power, and maintained themselves by Himmler's Gestapo and concentration camps, by the Blood Bath of 1934 and by a scientifically organised system of terror ever since. Individuals, parties and groups of all kinds were either silenced, or ruthlessly liquidated.

A drive against religion is common to both systems, shocking religious opinion throughout the world. Beginning with the refusal to recognise the democratic election of Pastor von Bodelschwingh as Reichbischof, the Nazis proceeded to suppress the Confessional movement led by Pastor Niemoller who, after being

acquitted by the courts, is still confined in the concentration camp at Dachau. The concordat with the Roman Catholic church has been systematically violated, until the German bishops at Fulda recently drew up a pastoral letter of protest which was read in all German Catholic Churches on July 6th last. The Russians, while permitting the Orthodox church to exist, used every administrative means to undermine its influence, and by means of anti-God campaigns tried to promote philosophic materialism amongst the masses.

Both systems have developed propaganda to a fine, if twisted, art, international Comintern, officially dissociated from the Russian Government, has carried on subversive activity throughout the world ever since the Revolution. The Nazis, through the *Schutzbund*, have done the same for Nazi ideals. Both have used this weapon as freely at home as abroad. Both believe that propaganda can achieve what the Englishman believes is reserved to an Act of Parliament—do anything except make a man a woman, or a woman a man.

A closer study of these very resemblances reveals differences which are significant and suggestive. The concept of totalitarianism, in the first place, is not identical in the two systems. Both, it is true, postulate the subservience of the individual to the state in every aspect of his life—his thought, his speech, his action, his social and political relationships. But the state's control over the individual must be for some purpose or end, and it is here that a difference is discernible. The Communist rationale of submission is the cultivation of a particular kind of life, the community life of corporate ownership and corporate living. The ultimate end of the Marxian State is "to wither away" as men recognise the truth of Communist concepts, and accept the Communist order of their own free will. Rational men, freed of all prejudices, believe the Communists, will accept this regime as the natural order of things because it is rooted in reason and founded on human psychology. The element of compulsion is temporary and is justified by Rousseau's dictum that those who do not recognise what is good for them must "be forced to be free." Cromwell expressed the same idea when he said men must have "what's for their good, not what pleases them." This attitude has affinities, and indeed is partly derived from Plato's *Republic*, where everything, down to family life, was communised in the interest of the state's pursuit of the good life. The Roman Church, in many things a pupil of Plato, adopted the same principle when it appealed to

authority to enforce the conditions necessary for the pursuit of its own conception of the good life. In other words, the Communist concept of totalitarianism has an ethical content, just as Plato's and Rome's and Cromwell's and Calvin's had, though to the non-communist it may seem a warped and incomplete one.

The Nazi conception of totalitarianism diverges from communism on this very question of purpose. For the Nazi purpose has no moral content. The aim of its totalitarianism is the cultivation of power. Power for what? it may be asked. More power, is the only answer which can be given. The Party must dominate the State, the State is to dominate the Continent, the Continent to dominate the world.

The same difference can be perceived in the respective attitudes to violence. In the Communist system, violence is a means to an end rather than an end in itself. It is the lever to the social revolution, made necessary by the baleful possessiveness of the capitalist class. It represents the cathartic process of purging a class which will never repent. Violence to secure power, and violence to suppress the counter-revolution (illustrated in the Red Terror) are means made necessary by the obstinacy of man in order to establish the classless society. But it is only a temporary expedient, made necessary by the weakness, not of man in general, but of men warped and twisted by capitalist society. Remove the cramping fetters of existing society and man will show himself for what he is—a reasonable, gentle, well-disposed, and social creature. Property, not sin, is the curse of man; a classless, forceless, viceless society in the true mirror of his nature.

To the Nazi these ideas are not only wrong, but repulsive. Violence—to the Nazi—is not only necessary, but desirable. The peaceful man is a weakling, the violent man a hero. "War," said Mussolini—before he embarked upon it—"is a biological necessity."

The Nazi attitude to violence is borrowed from Nietzsche who wrote in his *Zarathustra*: "You have heard that it has been said by them of old time: 'Blessed are the peacemakers,' but I say unto you: 'Blessed are the warmakers—for they shall conquer the earth'." The Nazi does not believe in either the nationality or the goodness of man. His is the Hobbesian conception, that man is compounded of competition, diffidence (fear), and glory. He is naturally unequal and falls into a series of descending categories from the Nazi superman, each more servile than the last. So while



both Communists and Nazis accept violence as a necessary stage in political evolution, to the Communist it is a regrettable means to a higher state of Society, to the Nazi it is an end and a good in itself. In Communist ideology, violence and force decrease as Communism progresses; in Nazi thought violence and the cult of force increase as Nazism progresses. If the Communist fails to explain how the cult of hate and violence can pave the way to brotherhood and perpetual peace, the Nazi fails to explain how violence and war can continue when there is no one left to fight. In Communism the means may sabotage the end; in Nazism the whole process stultifies both means and end.

In their respective attitudes to religion, the same kind of distinction can be seen. Both have admittedly persecuted religion, but their direction varies like the ascending and descending cars of a cliff railway. The track is the same, the direction opposite. The Russian Communists started with a religious terror because they regarded the Orthodox Church as an ally of Czarism and counter-revolution. Established in power, they ran anti-God campaigns on the theory that religion is the opiate of the people on lines which resembled the rationalistic dogmatism of the late Victorian scientists. But they have become in practice progressively more tolerant, so that twenty-four years after the revolution churches are still open and crowded, and the Orthodox Church, identified so closely with the old regime, is still an organised body. The proof of this is the Acting Patriarch Sergei's call to rally round the Government in defence of the Fatherland at the beginning of this war.

In Germany on the other hand, the Nazis began by appeals to the Churches for support -against the godless Communists. By swift degrees respect changed to patronage, patronage to hostility and hostility to persecution. Hitler began by appeals to the Almighty to help him and ended by orders to the Almighty to obey him. The Protestant Churches were first herded into one organisation: their episcopal elections were first quashed and then rigged. The dissentient Confessional church was frowned on and then actively persecuted. The Roman Church fared no better, for its concordat was systematically violated from its inception. Nazi hostility to Rome has reached its climax in the wholesale execution and imprisonment of priests in Poland. Ideologically religion to the Communist is a superstition to be grown out of; to the Nazi it is a rival to be extirpated. Hitler is the NAZI god, and the Germans must have no other gods but him.



Even in the realm of propaganda differences are revealed by a closer study of resemblances. The Nazi technique of propaganda was admittedly modelled in the first place on Russian methods, with an envious glance at British Great War methods thrown in. But the two have diverged in practice because they differ in their ends. In Nazi propaganda the primary aim is to sap a people's will, to divide, to corrupt, to burrow with a termite destructiveness, until the facade of national unity crumbles at the touch of German power. All overseas Germans are regimented in the *Schutzbund* and become willy-nilly spies or potential fifth-columnists. The Nazis exploit divisions, suspicions, resentments, jealousies, hopes and fears, all to the end of greater German power. Its essential purpose is to destroy. Russian propaganda has for its ultimate aim the establishment of communism throughout the world. This means within any given society, the replacement of one government by another, of one social system by another. It does not mean, as Nazi propaganda does, the poisoning of a nation's soul and the destruction of a people's spirit. Russian propaganda means the replacement of one way of living with another; German propaganda the destruction of one way of living and the enslavement of the people concerned to Germany. The aim is not a swapping of ideological horses, but the killing of the horse and the tying of the rider to the tail of his horse's murderer. However much Marxian Communism may be disapproved as a system, the fact remains that it is an attempt to organize world society on a basis of justice. Faulty and false it may be in many respects, but this is entirely different from the German principle—the domination of the German race over, and its exploitation of, all others.

When the two systems are studied side by side, it becomes clear that their common evils may be traced to a common source; that Nazism possesses, in addition, certain evils all its own; and that Communism displays certain gleams of virtue which the most suspicious cannot altogether overlook. The two evils which are conspicuous in both systems are the practice of absolutism and a belief in force and violence. Both systems are despotic in practice (whatever constitutional trappings may exist in Russia) and display the evils of what Cardinal Hinsley has described as "idoltrous absolutism." Absolute power is idoltrous because it places an individual, in relation to his fellows, in the position of God. It always breaks down because no individual can for long stand up to the strain. If a man showed the attributes of a

God, said Aristotle, it would be right to make him an absolute ruler, but not otherwise. No one knew better than Aristotle that such beings rarely if ever appear, and it was pedagogic vanity that made him see such a man in Alexander the Great. Plato subjected his philosopher-king to a lifetime of mental and moral discipline and then gave power to a board rather than a single individual. The quest for the union of wisdom with power is like that of the Holy Grail—it will never be completely fulfilled on earth. Lord Acton, who knew the workings of human nature in history as no other man, summed up the matter when he wrote, "all power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely."

Here a distinction must be drawn between *absolutism* and *totalitarianism*. Absolutism is the complete disposal by man of others. Totalitarianism is the total control of life by one man or group of men. One refers to the *degree* of control, the other to the *range* of control. An absolute system may not be totalitarian, or a totalitarian system absolute. Germany and Russia, the one both in theory and in practice, the other in practice only, combine the two. The good or evil of totalitarianism depends upon the philosophy which lies behind it, but absolutism is evil always and absolutely. Plato's Republic, the Roman Catholic Church, and the sovereign British Parliament are all totalitarian constitutions, for they all claim complete control over every branch of life. The fruits of the last two are not the dead sea fruit of Nazidom because their principles of life are different.

The second evil from which both systems suffer is a belief in force which justifies violence in the first place, and terror in the end. The belief that force can change men's minds is the perennial delusion of politicians, the perpetual short cut to lure countless generations down the path to frustration and bitterness.

He who is convinced against his will,  
Is of the same opinion still,

is trite but true in historical experience. The use of force is only valid in defence and when used aggressively, always rebounds on its user.

Communism and Nazism both inherit these two moral and political cancers from the German philosopher Hegel and his school of political absolutists. Hegel taught that the State was the embodiment of the developing Absolute on earth. It had therefore no limits to its claims and no bounds to its actions. The State was morality and the only sin which an individual could commit was disobedience of the State. His predecessor, the

Prussian Fichte, taught that the test of civilisation was power and proclaimed "the highest civilisation is the greatest power." Therefore the individual must bow to the State in all things, and the State must cultivate power in all its policies. Nazism inherited these ideas by direct succession, Communism through the Hegelian heretic, Karl Marx. Marx accepted Hegel's absolutism while he rejected the idealism upon which the whole system was founded. He adapted the Hegelian idea of evolution to his own materialistic analysis of society. And however humanitarian and benevolent a materialist philosophy may be, it has no defence against the insidious lure of violence, since it can find no valid reason for preferring a long cut to a short one.

Apart from these evils in common, Nazism has its own peculiar vices. They may be summarised as the belief in race and the belief in power as the ultimate good. Neither of these ideas is of course an original Nazi invention; it is only in combination that they achieve a certain grisly notoriety, like a macabre jazz tune played with the lights lowered. The doctrine of race is as old as the Aryan tribes, for it flourished among the Greeks and in ancient India. In its modern form it was propounded by a Frenchman, Gobineau, in the 19th Century, and developed by an Englishman, Houston Stuart Chamberlain. The doctrine that power or force is the only good was first advanced by Thrasymachus in Plato's *Republic* and repeated by Socrates in the same dialogue at the start of his enquiry into justice. In modern times it has been more trenchantly advocated than by any Nazi, by the Englishman Hobbes, who defined freedom as "what the laws do not forbid," and compared the state to the mythical monster Leviathan to whom "on earth there is not his like."

The Nazi doctrine of race has no scientific basis in anthropology whatever, for everyone knows that the European nations, to take only one group in the world, are not races, at all in the scientific sense, but blends in varying proportions of the Nordic, Alpine and Mediterranean stocks. Two of the most racially pure Nordic stocks in the world are the Norwegians and the Icelanders; the one is in revolt against Hitler and the other has called upon the Americans to save them from the Nazi embrace. Nevertheless Hitler asserts the superiority of the Aryans over all other races, and the superiority of the Germans over all other branches of the Aryan race, and the superiority of the chosen few amongst the Germans themselves over the common herd. The Germans are the *Herrenvolk* or master race, and within their ranks are

arising the new "supermen" from the élite of the Nazi youth. This construction may be called an aristocracy, and so it is; but it is an aristocracy not of talent or virtue, but of blood. Such an aristocracy cannot maintain itself by talent or virtue, for by definition it cannot possess a monopoly of either. It must therefore maintain itself by force. Force must call upon more force and leads inevitably to terror. How this system works itself out in practice can be seen in the working of the "New Order" in Europe to-day. After over a year some nations are cowed, some overwhelmed, but not one is reconciled; opposition has hardened to resentment and deepened into contempt. The path of force rapidly steepens to the abyss of anarchy.

These considerations lead on to the German cult of power. The popular writings of Nazi youth leaders like Baldur von Schirach, and advocates of Teutonism and pro-paganism, like Bergmann and Rosenberg, are only reflections, on this head, of the ideas of Friedrich von Nietzsche. Nietzsche was no nationalist and no race worshipper but he was the apostle of the ethical doctrine of power. His quest for truth started with a will to freedom and ended with a worship of power. The only way to win corporate freedom was by force, the only way to win individual self-fulfilment was by the cultivation of the will to power. From this follows, in due course, the complete reversal of ethics and the progressive brutalisation of man. Society based on evil principles would begin by plunging the world in war as the Germans have done, and end by developing a robot civilisation where work and activity would exist for nothing else but work and activity. If power and strength is the only ideal of man, only those qualities which conduce to power and strength are virtues, while those which detract from it are vices. Thus the higher virtues of mercy and sacrifice, the "mercy, pity, peace and love" of Blake, slide into place as the lower vices; and cruelty, pitilessness, ruthlessness and hardness of heart ascend to the range of higher virtues. The German aim is to purge from German civilisation the Christian tradition. But when that is done, nothing is left but the pitiless brutality of the natural man whose life, without rules, restraints or ideals is nasty, brutish and short." The more German culture is examined, the more clearly will the truth of G. K. Chesterton's saying be realised. "The great German civilisation was created by the great Christian civilisation; and its heathen forerunners left it nothing whatever, except an intermittent weakness for boasting."



If from Nazi theory we now turn to Communist, it will be found that beneath its crust of dogmatism and materialism, certain creative and constructive ideas can be detected. The starting point of communist thought, when all is said, is the public welfare, not the individual's and the state's lust for power. Public welfare, it is true, is conceived in material terms and the jargon of Communists is largely economic. But the life of the spirit is not denied; it is rather postponed pending the establishment of economic security and social justice. All the methods of communist agitation are largely means to this end. In consequence, its scale of values, its standard of ethics, is quite different. The individual is reckoned to be of equal importance and equally entitled to full share in life. The things of the mind are recognised as essentials, not mere decorative luxuries, and so education is esteemed as highly in Russia as in Scotland. It may be held that moral values are warped by Marxism ideology, specially by the doctrine of class hatred and revolution and the emphasis on the old fallacy that the end justifies the means. But standards and values still exist; they have not been overthrown or turned inside out. They may have been bent from the norm by the heat of Marxian prejudice, but they have not been replaced by their opponents. From the non-communist point of view, the spirit which presides in Russia is the spirit which errs, not the spirit which denies. The ideals of brotherhood instead of that of master and slave, of sacrifice instead of domination, of service instead of domination, of working for a common cause instead of for a common despot, are all still to be found in Russia to-day. Intellectual freedom is restricted by Marxian dogmatism but it is not destroyed. Marxian communism is a system which is avowedly built upon the bases of reason and justice, and as it becomes clear that the system departs from these two anchors of humanity, it must be and is being modified. Dogmatism impedes development, but does not rule it out. The Russian looks towards the light in blinkers; the Nazi, head down like primeval man, plunges ever deeper in the gloom of the jungle of force and fear.

Marxian Communism is, of course, by no means the only form of communist theory. The principle has had a long history, from its first exponent Plato, through the early Christian Church and the Middle Ages with its theory of the just price and the catchword

"When Adam delved and Eve span  
Who was then the gentleman?"



to the Diggers of Cromwell's day and the immediate forerunner of Marx. Most of the features which seem to disfigure Marxian Communism in Russia may be traced to the first word of the title and are not inherent in the second. In Russia itself, signs are not wanting that this is being increasingly realised. The emphasis on international revolution is giving place more and more to that on patriotism and defence of the fatherland. Attacks on religion changed into rationalistic assaults upon superstition and had nearly subsided altogether when the German war swept their last vestiges away. Class hatred and distinctions have declined far enough to allow members of the old order like Marshal Budenny to reach high positions. The freedom of sex relations with its corrupting social effects has been modified. In the pure collectivism of Marxian theory a leaven of individualism has increasingly been working. Dogmatism in the intellectual sphere has been steadily declining.

It is no part of the purpose of this article to present Communism as a perfect form of society any more than Nazism. It is its purpose, however, to draw a distinction between the two and to maintain that while the one is a system which, with all its faults, exhibits some healthy features and is capable of improvement, the other is a system whose essential principles are evil and which must therefore become steadily worse the more it unfolds itself. In the one the light can be seen, as at the end of a long tunnel, in the other the light recedes with each lengthening stride towards the realm of darkness.

### MANUSCRIPT DISCOVERED IN A BOTTLE

*Seven years ago a traveller, voyaging through strange seas of thought alone, wrote down some of his impressions and committed them, sealed in a bottle, to the deep. This bottle was recently cast upon a friendly shore. The manuscript is reprinted below. It needs no further comment.*

*"Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,  
Pilots of the purple twilight dropping down with costly bales."—  
Tennyson.*

When one considers that, speaking generally, since Man first put in an appearance on this globe up to 1914, the fastest means of movement on land had been the wheel and the horse and, on the sea, the sail and the wooden boat, and that, within 20 years from 1914, distance had been conquered to the tune of 11,000 miles in three days, one cannot help feeling that we stand now, like William Blake's agitated group, on the edge of the unknown, gazing apprehensively into space. These 20 years have chopped the history of the world—the course of mankind—in two; tomorrow will bear little semblance to yesterday. There has been virtually no twilight; only the very shortest transition period. The effect on the army is to be as great and as sudden as it will be on the community. The soldier has as much need as anyone else to single out tendencies that will guide him at least a few years ahead and along which he can direct his policy and so regain the constructive control which he seems in danger of losing. In other words, he must search always for the inevitable.

To illustrate what I mean, I put forward two such tendencies for consideration.

There are two factors, more than any others, which seem about to make a great difference to the organization and tactics of armies. The first is the accuracy of air bombing; the second is the increasing loads that aircraft are being designed to carry.

#### *The Accuracy of Air Bombing*

It seems futile that, in mobile warfare, aircraft should continue to indicate to artillery where and when to drop their shells, when the machine in the air can engage such targets itself with many advantages over the air-cum-gun method. The aeroplane can engage a target as soon as it is seen; can strike at a fleeting or moving target, and follow it up till it has destroyed or dispersed

it; it maintains direct observation from weapon to target throughout; it can interfere with the execution of the enemy's plans at a far greater range. It may be argued that the danger of losing a large number of aircraft under these conditions will be too great a risk to face. Against that argument it may be pointed out that it is more than likely that artillery reconnaissance machines will be shot down in fair numbers. It is true that an aeroplane is a more expensive equipment to risk than is a gun or even a section of guns, but its crew is even smaller than that of one gun. Men, more than machines, are precious in war; a fact that was fatally lost sight of in certain theatres in the Great War. We are soon to see a very large drop in the cost of aircraft comparable with the large drop in the cost of cars between 1914 and 1930. To-day one sees the tendency towards high speed in cars; such speeds as are not obtainable with reasonable safety on any roads in the world. There is this lust for speed tending towards claustrophobia and there is the outcry against the daily massacre on the roads. The inevitable result is that people must take to the air in their swarms as soon as aircraft are reasonably safe and that aircraft must cheapen as production rises. In any case, losses in war must be judged by the resulting losses and dislocation caused to the enemy. I maintain that direct air action will yield proportionately better results in mobile warfare than will indirect artillery action. It is incidental to say that gas, mechanised fighting vehicles and aircraft will keep wide areas of the next great war in a pretty fluid state. It does appear that the development of light weapons of accompaniment, of armoured fighting vehicles and the increased use of aircraft will tend to lessen the amount of field artillery required in battle, unless it is that field artillery is to make a radical change in its rôle and so in its equipment, tending to assume the nature of the tank.

Some people suggest that aircraft, instead of guns, could lay a smoke screen. For a big, deliberate operation this would be expedient and the idea needs development in peace; for any operation in which time is of importance it will probably be some years before communication is sure and quick enough to permit of such a use of aircraft. It is possible that our own aircraft will at times be used to screen our own movement some distance from the actual battle, e.g., the movement of columns on the road, or of tanks from and to points of concentration.

The British, we know, may have to fight in many parts of the world. It is, however, only against a first-class enemy that the

whole of the Regular Army will have to be employed, and in those places where we may have to fight a first-class enemy there will almost always be found scope in the terrain for the employment of armoured fighting vehicles in large numbers. For other purposes, such as the internal security of the Empire or the punishment of tribes on our borders, only a part of our army will be needed and probably no more than the local garrison. There appears to be plenty of room yet for mechanization, provided that we can carry these vehicles by sea.

There is no doubt that, as mechanised forces become more and more mobile and are more frequently used, aircraft will be increasingly needed to assist them in its destructive rôle as well as in that of reconnaissance. It is obvious, too, that aircraft used with very mobile forces will reach out a considerable distance in order to obtain timely information or to take timely offensive action against an equally mobile enemy, and it is very probable that a mechanised force, in order to get full use of its aircraft at the right time, will be controlled from the air.

To simplify the argument, one can say in general terms that we need aircraft to fit into the modern army where cavalry and long-range guns were fitted in in the past. This is only partially accurate, like most general statements, but forms a fair assessment.

So there are increasing demands from the Army for aircraft for its own peculiar domestic needs. It can hardly be expected that the Royal Air Force can fully attend to these needs or train its personnel to the knowledge of land warfare that we will require. In these circumstances we in the Army must have infinitely more air experience than we have to-day for at present we know far less than we should of aircraft and their limitations, while those outside the Army who do know tend daily to talk a different language from us. It seems probable that the independent air force will tend to produce machines more suited to its own great scope than to Army needs and that, unless the Army will fend for itself, no one else is likely to have the time to fend for it, and rightly too, for its needs are probably not the earliest needs of a great war.

Before many years have passed aircraft will be as common as motors are on the ground to-day. It seems that we in the Army are neglecting to study the immense potential destructive power of aircraft used to produce a direct effect on things tactical, and that we do not realise that with mechanised forces it may be the only weapon that can reach far enough out



to influence the battle immediately before the forces engage, or to check a beaten enemy.

It must be apparent that with this great increase in aircraft, it will be a normal thing to allot machines for tactical interference with a hostile army, and that slow-moving or large columns will seldom be permitted by aircraft to make use of the main roads. Small and fast moving bodies may escape their attention. To take this to its logical conclusion, armies will tend to be carried on mechanical transport and to possess a very high proportion of A.F.V.s while a great deal of the maintenance will be done by air to avoid huge casualties among the supplying M.T.

The conclusion is that the time is arriving when the Army must be prepared to finance its own air arm and to man it, for its own peculiar needs.

#### *Increasing Aircraft Loads*

It is inevitable that the heavy transport plane must come into ordinary commercial use before long. Slow machines with a big lift will evolve in great numbers.

For the past hundred years, since Napoleon gained mobility by living on the country, we have, bit by bit, been losing it by dependence on our lines of communications. An era is coming when, by carrying stores by air, the Army will be less and less tied to its L. of C. This will give back the mobility we have lost and will make it possible for mechanised forces to operate over distances hitherto undreamt of, especially in those countries where they can live on the country as far as petrol and oil are concerned. But, even now, with aircraft as it exists at present, we can at least make detachments from our main force and maintain them for short periods at some distance from the L. of C. thus making wide turning movements once more possible. The autogyro helicopter may make the problem of air supply more simple in difficult country.

It seems, then, that the time is arriving when the Army needs a small experimental air transport service of its own on which later to build.

I do not intend to belittle the importance of the independent air force. In fact, I think it must be given greater prominence for it is hard to conceive its future limitations. In war the three services must work together for one common end. The independent air force will, however, always look wider than Navy or Army and it is wrong to bind it in to the domestic tactical needs



of the Army. These needs the Army should meet from its own resources. It must have its own air arm for reconnaissance, for offensive action and for transport.

To deprive the Army to-day of the right to pay for, to own or to use any type whatsoever of motor vehicle would be no greater injustice and no less inexpedient than, in the near tomorrow, to deprive it of its right to pay for, own and use aircraft for its own domestic purposes.

It is not germane to this paper but it is nonetheless of interest to speculate on the limitations that aircraft bombs have placed on combined operations in which the Navy seek to convoy and to land an Army on foreign soil in the face of an unbeaten shore-based enemy air force.

The deductions I have made from the two "factors" on which my argument is based are not all the deductions that can be drawn from them. For instance, we may urge that the new mode of fighting needs a new kind of infantryman.

## HUMMET WEST

[*The story of a railway station in Eritrea.*]

By "CAV"

On the railway between Agordat and Cheren there is a small station called Hummet. There may be a few Italian railway staff and local Eritreans who know of its existence. Nearby, for a few weeks, was the station called Hummet West. It does not exist any more, but it was well known to many hundreds of British and Indian troops in March, 1941. They probably remember it gratefully.

The Imperial advance into Eritrea started suddenly. When it was known that the Italians were evacuating Kassala, which town they had taken earlier in the war, the chase started, and continued until Agordat. Although the Indian Division engaged had not had time to concentrate, and battalions which had not arrived only caught up with difficulty, Agordat was captured, by very few troops, in a brilliant action. The advance had been rapid, and it was only possible to despatch light forces to hasten the Italian retreat. These light forces were stopped a few kilometres from Cheren.

Up to Cheren from the Sudan frontier the country is flat with steep "jebels" rising from the plain. Cheren stands on the edge of the Asmara plateau, and presents one of the few possible approaches onto the higher ground. Both the railway and the road here climb steeply and at one point are close together on opposite sides of the Dongolaas gorge. The "jebels" are joined together and only at Cheren is there a made approach onto the plateau. To north and south the escarpment is impressive and steep, and even mule tracks are few and difficult.

The advanced elements came under accurate fire from both sides of the gorge. The road had been effectively blocked. The forward Brigade seized high ground on the north of the road. This rose steeply, and half way up there was the railway eight hundred feet above the plain. At the spur of the hill there is a tunnel. That tunnel is "Cameron Tunnel."

The Italians had already occupied a permanent fort, guarding the gorge and other even higher crests, facing our position. They overlooked the approach, and could observe most of

our movements. Cheren was clearly a position of great natural strength, proof against armoured fighting vehicles and there was no back door. As the Indian Division assembled, so did Italian and Eritrean forces.

Maintaining troops on hill-tops is always a problem. At first food, water and ammunition were carried up by men to Cameron Tunnel and Cameron Ridge. Next, Italian mules captured at Agordat were lorried forward, Sappers and Miners made a mule track up the hillside to the railway, and this part of the lift was done by pack mules. We occupied more ground to the north, but so did the Italians, and they remained in command of the "observation." Their maintenance was easier, for the plateau gave them a start of twelve hundred feet.

To the foot of the mule track supply was by lorry. As more and more Italian artillery assembled at Cheren, their guns paid increasing attention to the lorries bringing stores and water to the mule track. One point all vehicles had to pass was soon named "Hell Fire Corner," and the mules, although out of sight at the foot of the hill, began to receive attention. It became clear that supply by this route, even by night, would be difficult. An alternative was ready. The railway, which finally supplied nine battalions of Infantry, a pack battery and three hundred mules, ran under our positions, and at Cameron Tunnel had climbed 800 feet.

The Eritrean Railway is single-line, and remarkable in many ways. The gauge, 95 centimetres, is unusual, and the curves and gradients are exceptional. For about 20 kilometres west of Cheren, the line climbs up to the plateau, winding round the valleys, and north of the gorge. The gradient is severe, long stretches being  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. It is a fine engineering achievement. For the most part the formation is cut out of the rock, and the hillside is sheer above and below.

On arrival, the Engineer Troops of the Division (Sappers and Miners) found the line little damaged. A first reconnaissance was done by a motor cyclist, who rode alongside the track, and only fell off four times. In a cutting near Hummet, where the climb begins, there were ten derailed stone wagons. In Cameron Tunnel there were three derailed wagons. In another tunnel, about two kilometres on our side of Cameron Tunnel, there were ten more derailed wagons and some mines. There were no booby traps and high viaducts over gullies, culverts and bridges had

been left intact. Three box wagons had been left at Hummet undamaged. There were no locomotives.

A Company of Sappers and Miners removed the smashed wagons in the cutting, and the rear tunnel. To do the work in the tunnel an acetylene cutting plant and a lighting set were necessary, and heavy jacks and timber baulks had to be taken up. It was one day's work to cut the top off a wagon at Hummet station, to try hauling it with a 15-cwt. Morris lorry, and to prepare short ramps so that the lorry could be put onto the wagon. It was impossible to turn the lorry on the narrow railway formation on the hillside, and therefore it was necessary to be able to put the vehicle onto the wagon. These first efforts all proved satisfactory. The lorry, with its tyres outside the rails, hauled the wagon, on which went up to the tunnel the new rails, jacks, electric lighting set, and other gear, and food, water and blankets for the men. Having unloaded on arrival, the lorry reversed onto the wagon, which then coasted back down the hill, a brakesman in control. From Hummet, where preparations were made, to the tunnel was 13 kilometres by rail and about seven for a crow.

All this happened in the first few days. Clearing the line was obvious Sapper work, and it was evident the line might be useful as a supply route, and save sweat of men and mules. Even before the tunnel was cleared, three small trolleys were taken to pieces, manhandled over the smashed wagons, and presented to the Infantry at Cameron Tunnel, so that they had a means of lateral transport. They were immediately of use, and helped in distributing stores from the head of the mule track to troops in positions above the railway. The fourth trolley found had a stranger destiny. A motor-cycle was mounted on it; the back wheel sprocket was cut in half, and welded to the trolley axle. This strange combination wrote off a motor-cycle, but the "M/C Trolley" proved at once a valuable addition to the rolling stock. On this machine, the Sapper could go quickly to inspect work, and it was the fastest method of climbing to the tunnel area, and therefore in demand by officers who wished to visit forward units.

The Sappers finished the removal of wagons, brought them down to Hummet station and dispersed them along the line, repaired the track, and were about to commence other work when the attention paid by the enemy gunners to Hell Fire Corner, and the mules, made that route impossible for any convoys. A remarkable service of rail wagons, hauled by lorries, then commenced, and was perhaps the only alternative.

Wagons retrieved from the derailments were brought into service. They had been damaged, but had low sides and were made into "flats," ideal for the loading of small stores which would finally reach the troops by mule or by carrying parties. Each fortunately had a hand-operated brake, and with few modifications, such as removing the buffers and altering hooks, they could be used like the original wagon which took up stores to clear the tunnel. They were just long enough to take a water tank, across one end and yet leave room for the lorry to mount itself for the return journey.

The organization of this service had not gone far, nor had the demands on it grown, when the loading station, Hummet, had a nasty afternoon from medium artillery. The troops knew about dispersion and were dispersed; but this range was a new and surprising effort, and the Italian disliked these events at his late railway station. He could not, perhaps, see what was going on; but a lorry got burnt, there was other minor damage, and Hummet clearly was not a place to stay in.

To have started at a station further away, or to move there forthwith, was not quite the obvious solution. The lorries could not haul the wagons by night, for no lights could be used, and no driver could be expected to steer his vehicle, hauling a 15-ton wagon over embankments and bridges in the dark. It was important, therefore, to save time and going further back meant more time would be necessary in the round trip. The ballast at the side of the rail track was being torn out by the lorry tyres; this also slowed down the service.

The "station" therefore was moved away about three kilometres to the west, where the line was close to the main road, and out of sight of enemy O.P.s. Near this straight stretch of track, a notice was put up: "Railway Station." Units were informed where it had gone to, and it was named "Hummet West," by "A/Q" when he was told of these events. A further difficulty now arose. The last wagon down the hill had to be the first one up, so it had to be loaded quickly, and sent off again at once. Work was started on the ballast outside the rails, and with sand and gravel the track for the lorry tyres was rapidly improved. To avoid attention, this work was done at night, when the dust and men would not be seen.

The impudence of enemy gunner O.P.s, which occupied new heights on our flanks and increased the nuisance of "harassing fire," resulted in more troops being sent onto the hills above the



railway. This meant more "maintenance." To prepare for the final assault on Cheren it was necessary to dump in the forward area water, rations, ammunition, wire. The demand for transport therefore increased and despite croakings in the early days, the demand was met. A few knew the appointed day, and the organization settled down almost as routine.

The train service went twice a day; about dawn and about noon. Variation was good for the Italian. Each service was of six "flats," each hauled by a 15-cwt. lorry. They went off, one behind the other, to climb the 15 kilometres to the unloading stations, which were points on the hillside where there was enough room to unload and dump stores. Of these there were three: Bro East nearest Cheren; then Centre; and then Bro West. Bro East supplied most of the troops, and therefore the front four wagons usually went there. Centre and Bro West had one wagon each, numbers five and six. It was a strange sight to see the "flat" about to go, and quite amazing to see how much load a Morris lorry could pull. At one end, water in steel tanks: eight hundred gallons. Then, boxes of ammunition, grenades, wire, rations, biscuits; on top sandbags, tools, a few blankets; soldiers perched above, rejoining their units; an orderly with letters; and always a Sapper in charge of the brakes—a very important office. Perhaps an officer, with his greatcoat and a blanket, and minor necessities for his unit, who had been down for a conference (and a bath and a shave). The Sapper hauling lorry would arrive and back onto the coupling. More would be piled into the lorry. The total load of stores often exceeded 10 tons. The wagon ahead would be given a couple of hundred yards' start, and off went the next one. If all went well, with all six wagons, they might be back in three hours.

All did not always go well. The strain on the lorries, always in the lower gears, was considerable, and there were cooling and other troubles. The Italian did not seem to realise each little service towed towards his defeat about 40 lorry loads of stores, but the vehicles annoyed him, and most days he shelled the line at some point. He could see almost everything, and shelled any movement. One favourite stretch earned the name of "Windy Corner." The drivers deserve much praise. They could not leave the narrow but not straight path. Such careful steering is a great strain on the wrists, and against time, with other wagons behind them, they could not wait until things were quieter, but ground steadily up the line. Day after day the same

drivers took the wagons, for it was difficult work, and changes led to accidents and delays. Four times shell fire cut the rails. But a breakdown gang travelled on every service, on the last wagon, and it is surprising how quickly a rail can be changed. There were injuries, of course: two men were blown off a wagon by blast from a shell: a lorry went off the track and overturned: omelettes take eggs.

Water always tells a story. The ration on the hill was a gallon per man per day, and 10 for each mule. At the end, 56 tons was sent up each day, a reserve of 20,000 gallons was stored in bulk at the forward "Stations," and 20,000 more had been taken even higher up the hills in tins as battalion reserves. So with food and ammunition: it was near and ready.

As soon as the line, rising to Cameron Tunnel, had been seen, a loco, steam, Diesel, or petrol had been asked for. But converting a locomotive to a new guage, even a small Diesel, is not easy nor can it be done quickly, and perhaps workmen in a machine shop, hundreds of miles away, never knew how urgently they were required. Something which could run at night was essential. When Diesel Locos finally did come, they were of great value; but this was not until the eve of the battle for Cheren and by then we were confident of our lorry-hauled service, and had no wish to excite Italian attention. The Diesels were 75 B.H.P., and could haul only two wagons each on the severe gradients. In the meantime the situation was saved by work in the field, and a strange creature, the "Night Hawk," was built.

The risk of losing a day through a bad break in the line from shells or bombs was serious and something which would run on the rails and therefore useable at night was most urgently required. Sappers in a Division do not carry much machinery, but they have one lathe and one drill, and with these and ingenuity the "Night Hawk" was constructed. The ingredients were one wagon chosen because the brake gear over one axle had already been smashed, and could be cut out without tears; one captured lorry chosen for its good condition; and one piece of good luck. Who left, years ago, in the public eye near Hummet West, the chassis of a Fiat lorry, with chain drive to the back axle? These Fiat sprockets and chains were—oh—so valuable. It is not simple to get a lorry drive onto the axle of a railway wagon, but it was done, and the Fiat gearbox and chains made it possible. The "Night Hawk" took 10 days to make, final assembly being 24 hours' continuous work by keen men. It worked, and would run

at night without being steered. Too precious to risk by day, it was used in the dark, and hauled up 1,500 gallons of water on each trip. The fact that it would not pull in reverse at more than one mile an hour did not matter, for the return journey of all wagons on the steep gradient was always the fastest. The "Night Hawk" merely grumbled blue smoke from its ancient gear box, fearful of such dangerous speeds backwards, downhill!

There were asides. Putting in a turnout at Hummet West was an obvious improvement. The rails and points were fetched from Agordat and proved to be of a different section but that did not matter. To get water to Hummet West another train of two wagons and hauled by a lorry went back to a station where there was a supply and brought it forward, slopping about in canvas tanks. This was the "Water Ferry." The water lorries of all units helped too, bringing water to Hummet West, and a small pumping plant was put down to speed up refilling the tanks on the wagons.

The trolleys were a godsend. The line forward of Bro East to Cameron Tunnel went straight under Italian noses. They "shot up" this piece of line, by day, but only once warmed it up at night, although tons of stores went forward in the dark, within machine-gun range, on trolleys pushed by men or hauled by mules. Four trolleys were found on the line. One was disclosed by a local inhabitant, in exchange for treatment of the many family ailments. Later, one a day was manufactured, altering two-foot gauge axles brought from a gold mine 110 miles away. But the trolleys were a nuisance also. Several times those in charge let them go by mistake. They would hurtle down the line, and approach at 50 miles an hour. Quick work with a large stone would derail them, but more usually they ended their honourable career by hitting a wagon. Wagons are very solid, and do not mind little wooden trolleys.

Then too, there were unauthorised persons who would use part of the line as a road just as the hauling lorries used it. This was usually possible by arrangement and usually disastrous when otherwise. One night when a small water lorry met a wagon and was smashed the Sappers hardly commented; it was not their lorry. Next night when a petrol tin on the line derailed a wagon, they were quite furious and called for discipline and the removal of obstructions.

The traffic was not all one way. By the appointed date a space was cleared and a new track had been cut so that lorries

could return separately. During the battle many lorries came back in this way, leaving the wagon tops clear for wounded. The brakemen brought back many tender loads. At night the Diesels pushed up other wagons and these ran straight through on the return journey to the Main Dressing Stations—a journey of 23 kilometres. This evacuation of wounded by trolleys and rail must have saved much pain, and was preferable to a jolting ambulance. It was also quicker. Many prisoners and enemy wounded came back in the same way. All showed much surprise. The wagons bowling back, some with wounded, some with water tanks and some with lorries, were a strange sight.

Little can the Italian have known that on his railway went forth against him each day the sinews of war: hauled in his wagons; each night water, hauled in his wagons, towed by bits off two of his lorries. For he left us sufficiently alone. The preparations went on, the trolleys each night, the wagons each day. Finally the assault was possible. In a few days he cracked and was broken.

With him went "Hummet West." It will never be a station again.

## YOUR HOME BEFORE YOU RETIRE

By ASLIM

In the July issue of this Journal was a very interesting and valuable article by JOYCEY, entitled "Your Home when you retire." This subject—and the ramifications of it—is one to which far too little thought is given; and while one can find little with which to disagree in what "Joycey" has written, it is felt that officers may like to hear of the tackling of a similar problem approached from a different angle.

The problem facing the writer was that, after a spell in England, he was returning to India and expecting to retire in seven or eight years. There were many personal reasons why his family could not accompany him at the time, the one which is likely to be a common factor in many officers' problems being that he was going to a non-family station. On top of this was the question of children to educate; grandparents, aunts and other relations were not well situated for such a responsibility, and in any case it was decided that it was preferable that the children should have a home with their mother rather than with relations; after all, taking this view does not prevent the wife going abroad for six months' holiday nor the husband from getting Home leave, and the period of separation can be brought within reasonable limits.

The factors which guided the writer in the choice of locality were somewhat different from those affecting JOYCEY's choice. In the first place the real country was ruled out because of the education problem. The children were too young to go to a boarding school and so the choice lay between day schools and a resident governess. (Admittedly, elementary daily education *can* be come by in the country, but it is the exception to find anything satisfactory, and if it proves unsatisfactory it is difficult to effect a change. A resident governess, apart from direct expense, involves much indirect disbursement; a larger house, bigger rent and higher rates; possibly an extra servant; bigger butcher's, grocer's, dairy and other household bills; extra lighting; to say nothing of the probable expenditure of your wife's patience and tact. Day schools having, then, been decided on, it followed that a "residential" area where there are many other



children wanting day schools was the alternative. Few families about to set up a home have any sentimental or other ties attaching them to any particular "residential" area, and in the writer's case the choice was dictated by distance from the place where he was then living. Except for an occasional long expedition on Sundays the radius of search was limited to areas within motor-ing distance on weekday afternoons or evenings. In the Home Counties this small radius will be found to include a number of localities entirely suitable from the points of view of health, type of country and type of neighbourhood.

The next point to decide in establishing the home was whether a furnished or unfurnished house was wanted, and if the latter, whether to lease, buy or build. Many people have a "few sticks of furniture" waiting for them, furniture which parents are only too willing to make available, and can usually spare, to start their sons and daughters in a new home. If such is the case, or even if it isn't, one's own furniture is always so much nicer than anybody else's, and if it can possibly be managed, an unfurnished house should be aimed at. More about furniture later.

The great advantage of buying or building over leasing is that a lease will never coincide with the period the house is required and the tenant—your wife—is almost certain to be worried at some future time with either trying to sub-let the small remainder of her lease—a broken period which will not suit anybody—or with trying to get an extension—and once more not knowing if the extended period is going to be convenient; whereas, on the other hand, if the house is your own you are not going to have any anxieties of that nature unless and until you decide to give up the house; you can then sell it or lease it without any restrictions other than those you impose or relax yourself.

There is much to be said for building and it must be great fun. The writer, however, decided against building for the following reasons. In the first place there wasn't time and there seldom will be for people similarly situated unless the wife is prepared to tackle the job single-handed. Next, either you take the advice of your architect or builder and find you have incorporated all the features, architectural and domestic, which he insisted upon and you really didn't want, or you overrule him and find he was right after all. There is some truth in the saying that it is the second house you build which will be a success.

When you start looking for the new home you are going to establish, you start off full of enthusiasm and the spirit of adventure. But take warning; acute depression supervenes as disappointment follows disappointment and expedition after expedition results in nothing but fatigue.

JOYCEY has considerably understated the house agent's optimism in regard to what he hopes to persuade you to buy. "Five bed-, three recep-" is not an unusual standard at which army officers will aim; this statement of your requirements will not prevent the agent from pressing you, or misleading you, into inspecting a house with 10 bedrooms and a billiard-room. Such a house will be a real "bargain;" but it is, of course, a white elephant, and its owners are selling it dirt-cheap because they cannot afford its upkeep in maintenance, repairs, servants, rates and taxes. Sometimes you will come across a real "gem," both architecturally and domestically—almost the dream house. The owner is asking double what you are prepared to offer but you assume that the agent knows that he is anxious to sell and will come at least half way to meet you. You will be wrong; the owner is insulted by your offer—and you sympathise with him—and you go away with your tail between your legs. Other minor unpleasantnesses are to be met with when a tenant, having a house sold over his head, receives you with hostility and when an occupant wont trust you out of his sight, even in the hall, to enable you to discuss things with your wife.

One develops quite a new vocabulary when house-hunting and one term which arouses a little curiosity is "an enter-and-return drive." It means a drive where you go in forwards but come out backwards.

Any wise amateur will have his house "vetted" before he commits himself. This may develop into a most depressing procedure. A surveyor likes to charge for his services a percentage on the value of the house; but as the value of the house should depend to some extent on the result of the survey, this method of assessing the fee seems unsound. The writer, after some discussion, persuaded the surveyor to charge 10 guineas per house. For that charge the surveyor twice made it quite clear that otherwise eminently suitable houses, discovered after much toil and perseverance, were shocking bad investments—jerry-built—no foundations—roof in need of replacement—liabilities of one sort, or another. The number of times one can throw 10 guineas

down the drain is limited, and every throw disheartening; but still it is better to throw guineas down the drain by the 10 than by the thousand, and to dispense with survey would be madness.

One snag which must be watched is the private or "undeveloped" road. Such a road is liable to be taken over by the local borough or rural council, and before it is taken over they will insist on its being brought up to council standards. For the compulsory pleasure of having your lane maintained by the council, you may therefore find yourself charged up to £1 per foot of frontage. Beware in particular of corner-houses which may have 400 feet of road frontage.

A little advice as to "decoration." It is only human nature that, while your predecessors are quite content with the state of the house, you will consider it in a disgusting condition and in need of renovation from top to bottom. Getting in a "builder and decorator" to do up your house is a very quick way of spending money, while your own efforts are not likely to be entirely satisfactory. A compromise is probably the best. Get a builder to do the two most important rooms in the house—the kitchen and the drawing-room—and do the rest yourself (assuming that only painting and colour-washing are required). £15 will be ample in most cases for brushes, paints, washes, etc., for a small house, inside and out. Before the war a builder would charge about £6 for one small room. Start yourself on the less important rooms; you will be surprised how much better your last efforts are than your first. Keep your mouth shut when white-washing a ceiling or painting the roof gutters.

JOYCEY has said that it is extraordinary how many odd things find a home in the garage. He is not sufficiently emphatic. Prams, bicycles, scooters, children's wheelbarrows, and innumerable treasures make separate accommodation for these "odd things" almost indispensable. The writer wanted to get a "lean-to" added to the existing garage, to accommodate all this junk. Every builder and odd-job man in the neighbourhood was consulted and no estimate under £25 could be obtained. In desperation he decided to build the blasted thing himself, and found that £12 spent on materials covered the cost of everything, including a concrete floor, and more than half of this went on tiles for the roof—a local building condition. The only "cheating" was that some old cucumber frames were incorporated as windows. The building has stood for six years and is the cause

of great satisfaction to the amateur builder who incidentally discovered that this type of building is not really a "lean-to!" it is a "hang-on."

Intending home-builders will complain that it is not everybody who can splash £12 here and £15 there. Every individual, is, of course, the best judge of his own finances and extras must be curtailed; but when once the adventure of establishing a home of your own has been embarked upon and the necessary capital is to be raised, an extra £100 in the initial outlay will enable you to indulge in improvement for which you will find it much harder to find £100 when you have settled in.

To return to furnishing. The writer and his wife between them could raise a dining-room table, a sideboard, a cabinet, a wardrobe, a chest of drawers, a "secretaire" and a couple of oak chests; in addition they had adequate crockery, etc., and a few rugs to go on the drawing-room floor. It sounded a good start, and so it was; many thanks are due to generous parents and to friends who had "weighed in" with useful wedding presents. And this nucleus of furniture was of a much better standard than anything likely to be acquired later. But it represented a meagre proportion of what was required to furnish a house. You will notice that all rooms except the dining-room are devoid of any sort of seating accommodation and have no tables or bookshelves. There is not one bed or mattress and no floor coverings at all except the few rugs. All the bed-rooms, maid's bed-room, nursery and dressing-room require cupboards, dressing tables, chests of drawers, toy chests, etc. And what about curtains? The kitchen needs cupboards, cooking pots and perhaps a stove. Add to these housemaid's implements, dustbins and coal scuttles, and you will be able to carry on while you are finding out all the other "essentials."

It is not however, necessary to be too depressed. Assuming that "antiques" can be dispensed with, patience and pertinacious attendance at sales in local auction rooms and at houses of a standard similar to one's own will produce all that is required at a very reasonable cost; not ideal, of course, but adequate and satisfactory. Gaps can also be filled in by the purchase of white-wood furniture at the local ironmonger, to be painted at home.

Is this home, established primarily for the education of children, to be a home for final retirement? A difficult question to answer. It was certainly not originally intended as such, but

whether or no it will so develop is a matter for individual decision. The answer probably depends a great deal on how the retired officer intends to spend his "declining" years, and that is a problem to which all-too-little thought is given. The writer has often asked contemporaries how they are going to employ themselves on retirement and the answer has always indicated, vaguely, perpetual leisure—and boredom. It is ridiculous to think that a man with 20 useful years ahead of him need willingly become a drone. Employment, remunerative or unremunerative, will defer the "decline" for a long period. And the selection of a home after retirement will largely depend on what occupation is contemplated or hoped for. In many cases it will probably be found that a home established before retirement will result in ties and friendships which may lead to employment after retirement. In such cases, unless there is a hereditary home waiting, or some similar call, the perpetuation of the home established before retirement will offer many attractions.

That is a problem the writer has yet to face. Meanwhile his home has given him several years of mental peace. Before this war started, domestic complications which go with courses, non-family stations, "small wars," Munich crises, etc., have been avoided; while a home to go to on furlough and at which to leave things and find them again has given a sense of security. And since the war it has been a comfort to know that there is only one peripatetic member of the family, now on his second tour overseas. If a bomb drops on one's own house it is admittedly more inconvenient than if it drops on one's landlord's house; on the other hand, the knowledge that one has a "stake in the country" may perhaps help one to carry out one's duty with a grimmer determination.



## MOSUL TO DEIR-EZ-ZOR

## A MECHANISED MOVE—LOW SCALE

BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL F. MACKENZIE.

"There's the crossing," said my driver, as the old Ford panted round the last sandhill and came out on to the sandy shore of the Euphrates where it sloped down to the river. I was disappointed; I had imagined a bridge and a pleasant drive in after a day full of fatigue and adventure.

We drove down to the water's edge and halted below a small block house, the only building within sight. There was no sign of activity on our bank, no boats, no ferry; just the blazing sun going down in front of us, and on the other side was the city, and the usual scene; women filling water jars, *dhobis* at work, and smoke going up from the fires of the evening meal.

This was exasperating; literally not a soul in sight on the Eastern bank. And so I turned towards the block house and as I did so a figure in a blue uniform with two stripes on his arm came to meet me. "Bon soir caporal," I remarked, cheerfully pulling out my best French, "Je desire aller a Deir Ez Zor." "A ce moment? Mais apres sept heure il est defendu." "Defendu." Impossible! Il faut que j'arrive chez M. le Gouverneur pour le diner." This was a half truth, as I had in my pocket an introduction to the Military Governor and in any case I hoped it might galvanise the corporal into action; but nothing of the sort happened. In a cool and indifferent tone he explained that the ferry did not work after 7 P.M. and that all the ferry men had gone home and were now literally or metaphorically in the bosoms of their families and there wasn't the slightest chance of their appearing before 6 A.M. next morning. With that he walked back into the block house.

This was the last straw and I was about to follow him with some choice remarks in my mother tongue when he appeared again and, to my surprise, remarked, "If monsieur would not mind a paliasse for the night, I could accommodate him in the post and perhaps provide a little dinner?" Never had a soft answer turned away wrath more quickly. Forgotten were my horrid thoughts on French administration in general and the absent ferry men in

particular. I had had visions of spending the night hungry and uncomfortable in the back of the old Ford with my strange companions, a Jewish Rabbi and his servant. Sanctified spiritually the Rabbi may have been, but not with soap and water.

I had left Mosul early in the morning, expecting to be in Deir-ez-Zor about tea time: I had taken the precaution of bringing some sandwiches and a water bottle (military pattern) with me. The Rabbi and his servant shared the back seat with a mountain of kit between them; I preferred the Mosulawi driver as companion.

Before we started, I noticed the floor was littered with inner tubes, many of them already heavily patched; so many of them in fact were there that I took them to be part of the very mixed cargo we were carrying. Later I discovered their purpose. After half a dozen false starts, I thought we were really going to clear the market place when I felt a tap on my shoulder and heard the voice of the Rabbi's servant saying in confidential tones: "Excuse me, zir, but you will take zis for me in your case?" and with that he tried to slip a little sealed box into my hands. Of all the brass cheek. Without any explanation as to its contents he thought I was going to smuggle some foul drug, or musk or jewelry into Syria for him. In vain he pointed out that the customs authorities would never search the kit of a British Officer, or if they did, would never break a sealed packet. All I had to say was that it was "a little present for Madame" and they would understand. It was all so simple; did I not understand? I didn't, and I repeated my refusal in English, Urdu and French, followed by a mixture of all three. I appealed to His Holiness in the back seat but, beyond a non-committal murmur from the depths of his beard, got little change out of him. In fact I was beginning to wonder whether he was an interested party when the driver decided matters by getting in to gear and chugging out of the serai.

We hadn't gone 10 miles when there was a resounding pop and the car swerved into some loose sand and came to a halt: the driver switched off and unconcernedly garlanding himself with one of the spare inners went round to the back of the car, got out the jack and did the necessary. This procedure was repeated at hourly intervals till we reached the frontier, where we were duly challenged and required to report at the Customs. It was a mid-day in August and a very sleepy inspector looked at our passports

and gave us documents to sign. I had no intention of arguing the point but when he indicated the dotted line on a document that was upside down, I jibbed. I wish his photo could have been taken at that moment. Was he really illiterate, or did he think I was trying to get at him? I shall never be certain. I presumed the clerical party had got away with their sealed packet or else bribed it through; anyway I had just got back into the car and was throwing my raincoat over the back seat when the now familiar voice remarked, "Exguse me zir," and, without the faintest sign of a blush extracted the packet from one of the pockets of my coat. When I got my breath back, we had a good laugh—what else could one do with such a man?

The car had only just got clear of the village where the Customs Post was situated when, crossing a small *nala*, we saw a man, carrying a rifle, running towards us. Perhaps he wanted loot, or perhaps only a lift. Anyway the driver waved him off, the Rabbi shook his beard at him, the pickpocket said yalla and I added "no room old son" and thought the matter finished when there was a loud bang. This time it wasn't a back tyre and it was quickly followed by another and the bullet ricocheted off the radiator. Fortunately the road in front was moderately good, the ruts being not more than a foot deep, so the driver trod on the gas and the cloud of dust we raised must have put up a useful smoke screen and we had no further trouble from the gentleman behind.

From now on we ran for several hours between red-hot boulders and deep ruts of sand: the old car stood it marvellously well but eventually the inevitable happened and the cap of the radiator blew off. The driver and I bent double and it was while I was gazing at the floor boards that I noticed we had only two inner tubes left; in other words we could only enjoy another couple of bursts. After the radiator had stopped pretending to be a geyser, we all got out and the driver emptied the last *chagal* of water into it to make up for some of the water lost: I pulled the cork out of my water-bottle and inserted a finger; the water would have done nicely for shaving, so I virtuously offered it to the radiator. The next two hours passed without incident, except that we were all developing a raging thirst and it was with a cry of relief, nearly equal to Xenophon's "Thalassa, Thalassa," that we came over a ridge and saw the Euphrates just below us. At the same moment there was a familiar pop but nothing could stop us now and we bumped down the slope to the water's edge

The water was grey and thick, full of suspended matter commonly known as mud and was only a few degrees cooler than our bodies—but it was wet. I thought of chlorination, filtration and pot. permang. and all the horrors of coccis, cholera and the typhoid group, but none of them stopped me. The only precaution I used was to take out my whisky flask and hope that a 50% mixture would kill the germs—it did, and me too nearly.

It was from this point that we ran alongside the east bank of the river till we reached the ferry post opposite Deir-ez-Zor.

F. M.

## SOME IMPRESSIONS OF THE BLITZ

BY CAPTAIN G. R. W. BEAL

*"And gentlemen in England now abed . . . ."*

There was no real reason, or perhaps to put it better, there was no absolute urgency to go to town, but as the oldest inhabitant had so succinctly put it in the pub the evening before, "We can't let that there 'itler stop us doing ordinary things."

My first contact with the blitz came at a neighbouring town in the shape of a little rat-faced, shifty looking man, who, as the train pulled out from that station, said to the carriage at large, "We can't stick it ye know."

The conversation in the carriage stopped, and its inhabitants regarded the shifty looking man uncomfortably. He was obviously not a West-country man and, perhaps, therefore, to be classified as a foreigner. Then, just as the conversation was about to start again (for we talk more in our railway carriages now), he reiterated his remark. Again there was a silence. Then a youngish woman sitting beside him opened her mouth:

"Can't stick wot?" she said.

Her tone was almost belligerent.

"This 'ere bombing," he said. "Lost me 'ouse I 'ave.

The carriage made noises of sympathy and seemed prepared to leave it at that; but not so the little lean man.

"T'ain't worth it, ye know," he said. "T'ain't right. Can't ask people to put up with this sort of thing."

A man—sitting in the far corner, who up till then had been playing with a little girl, took his pipe out of his mouth and surveyed the man critically.

"You're English, aren't you " he said.

"Yus," was the reply, "wot of it "

"Well," said the quiet man, "I think we will be able to stick what the Spaniards stuck in Barcelona, and a bit more. I admit I have not seen any of it yet, but if I know my fellow countrymen at all, which I think I do, Hitler is going to get nothing out of this show.

"That's all very well," said the other, "but I tell you London won't stick it, and it ain't right to ask 'em to."



The man in the corner stirred uneasily.

"What would you have thought," he said, "if the lads at Dunkirk had turned round half way through the show and said that "

"I ain't no perishing soldier. I ain't bloomin' well going to be. Anyway, wot's it got to do with you?"

The other sighed gently, and gathering the little girl from the seat opposite him, and removing some suitcases from the racks, he opened the door of the carriage and piloted the party into the corridor.

"The air, I think," he said, "will be fresher out here." And he left.

Thus ended the episode of the first and last Englishman I met who could not take it.

The next realisation of the blitz was when we stopped and sat in the train for over an hour and a half outside a suburban junction. The third realisation when on arrival at the junction we were told that a London station was out of action. Enquiries about return trains and kindred matters delayed me for some ten minutes on the station after the train got in, and my fellow passengers had all gone their several ways when I left the station.

I walked down the exit steps to the road side by side with a Tommy in battle dress. As we did so it struck me that there was something odd, something missing, something un-London-like about it all. As we started to cross the road I suddenly realised what it was. All the traffic had stopped, and apart from a couple of people who were running quite rapidly along the pavement towards us there was not a soul to be seen. Just at that moment there came the sound overhead of aeroplane engines, and in foolish and idle curiosity I turned to look at them. As I did so one of the planes broke formation and seemed to dive direct at the station itself. I am afraid my reflexes were not working very quickly. I was just preparing to stand and gape, when a hefty smack in the back propelled me across the road and under an archway, and I realised that Thomas Atkins was shouting in my ear all sorts of encouragement to head for cover because the "beggar was a Bosche"

From beyond the archway a voice called to us, "In here, in here." And we nipped across a small courtyard and down a flight

of steps towards a doorway which was marked "Shelter," at the door of which was an A. R. P. warden calling to us. The steps were rather steep and I was preparing to take my time negotiating them when somewhere behind us was one of the most colossal crashes I have ever heard in my life. The warden ducked: Thomas Atkins said a few of those things that only Thomas Atkins can say on these occasions; and I arrived inside the shelter with my coat tails almost up the back of my neck. My progress was stopped by a large and odoriferous gentleman who had obviously not washed for many moons, but who had a particularly genial and unperturbed smile.

"Come in out of the rain, ducky," he said, "or you're likely to get wet."

Inside the shelter were all sorts and conditions of people, but I saw absolutely no sign of panic. Indeed one little incident is perhaps significant of the attitude of these people to the whole business. The way into the shelter was open, and possessed no form of barricade to stop blast or splinters from a bomb should it fall directly in front of the doorway. A young fellow noticed this, and also noticed that a girl who was sitting on the end of one of the benches was in the direct line for any such blast or splinter. Getting up from where he was sitting he went across to her and said, "I think you had better have my seat. It's a bit draughty where you are."

She looked at him for a moment, then at the doorway, and then realising quite what sort of a draught he implied, shook her head.

"That," he said, "is quite silly," and picking her up quietly bundled her into his seat and sat fairly and squarely on that which she had left.

As one does on these occasions, people talked in rather hushed voices, and when the all-clear at last sounded the sudden spontaneous roar of London coming to life again reminded me most forcibly of "In Town To-night" on the wireless, when the announcer says "Carry on London."

When we emerged from the shelter, which everybody did as fast as they could in order to catch buses, trams, etc. and get home for tea. The first sight that met our eyes was really humorous. Sitting on the pavement outside the station, their slouch hats on the back of their heads, their feet in the gutter,

smoking, and playing chukey stones, were about fifty or sixty Australian soldiers, whose one concern in life seemed to be to find out from everybody who passed, if a 76 bus ran anywhere round there. Apparently they have been there all the time!

Night was spent in a flat in a garden square, where I found myself a sort of unofficial lord of a minor harem. The two bright young things, one of them married by the way, who normally inhabited the flat had been reinforced by a third, and no sooner had I arrived than they propounded to me the day's great problem. Namely, should we feed then and there before the evening blitz started, or should we transport to the basement with us some form of cold support, or should we leave the supper on the table in the flat and dash up between bombs and see what we could do about it. Disliking consuming a meal at its wrong time intensely, and not being as agile as I used to be, and also quite frankly not really being prepared to argue for my supper with a thousand-kilo bomb, I plumped for the middle course. We were in the middle of our preparations for our basement picnic when the evening alert went, as the harem plaintively complained, an hour early. I must say we made a picturesque gathering. Myself in a gent's natty suiting, less collar, tie and coat (for I knew only too well the agonies of trying to sleep in them) over which I had pulled a Free Forester sweater, the property of my hostess's husband; the harem in various forms of beach pyjamas and corduroy bags of rainbow hue, and in one case I must say positively devastating cut. On top of each member's head was balanced the blankets, eiderdowns, pillows, etc., with which they intended to make their night's rest as comfortable as possible, while any spare arms, elbows, and even teeth, were used to manhandle the baskets of provender.

Apparently our preparations for the night had taken such a time that when we arrived in the room provided in the basement for the tenants of the flat to use it was full. Various muffled and surly looking figures were deeply ensconced in every sofa or arm-chair, and the legs stretched forth from the same sofas or arm-chairs occupied every vacant foot of floor space. Finally a large notice saying "No smoking" decided us to try the passage outside. Here we packed down like sardines. One of the harem ensconced herself on a somewhat rickety settee, the two others and myself giving a somewhat somnulent version of the thorn between two roses. First we ate supper, and then on my suggestion the

party tried to settle down for the night. Here I found I had the bulge on the harem. Years spent sleeping on charpoys, camp beds, and nullah beds had accustomed my frame to sleeping where and when it was laid down. The roses, it must be confessed, were a blamed nuisance. First of all they wanted to talk. Secondly they seemed utterly unable to lie on the same side for more than thirty seconds put together. Thirdly, one of them, the married one, when she did get to sleep kicked like a mule. Fourthly the lady on the settee was under the impression that every bang she heard was a bomb, and quite failed to realise that three-quarters of the noise going on was one of our own anti-aircraft guns that was situated not too far away and whose crew must have put up very nearly a record for the number of shells in the air at the same time. Indeed, firm action had to be taken with this lady, who was not in the least panic-struck but insisted on keeping aloud a tally of the bombs dropped for her own edification. The steps taken to reduce her to a sense of the correct behaviour in communal shelters will not be divulged.

One thing that did strike me, for the short period that I was awake during the night when bombs were falling, was the amazing promptitude with which police cars, and I presume A.F.S. and A.R.P. personnel, were getting to the scene of trouble. Hardly did a bomb fall before one heard a whistle, and the drone of a car heading in the direction of the crash. The organisation must be superb.

The "All-Clear" coincided with dawn, and the first thing I did was to open the sitting room windows and walk out on to the balcony. It was a greyish dawn, and had been raining slightly. I looked about to see what damage had been done. At one time it had certainly sounded as if bombs had fallen all round us, yet look as I would I could not find a single brick out of place. Down below in the street a black cat was disconsolately washing his face. Further along the road a horse and cart, a delivery van of some sort, was proceeding at a steady amble. All was peace.

Returning inside I went to see how the harem were faring. From the bathroom came the sounds of song; evidently one of the ladies believed in having a bath whatever happened during the night. From the kitchen came the pungent and crisp smell of frying bacon. From the room at the far end of the flat a vision appeared in dressing gown and pyjamas, who announced that the programme was breakfast and then sleep. I gave the harem full

marks for breakfast. Not only were the sausages and the bacon superbly done, but one would hardly have recognised in the embryo film stars who surrounded the table, clad I must say almost disconcertingly transparently, the rather dishevelled and somewhat sleepy-eyed lasses which the "All-Clear" had disclosed.

That really finishes this story of the blitz, but one little anecdote of the aftermath of that night may be amusing. The city branch of the Westminster Bank had every window in the place blown in that night. At ten o'clock next morning workmen were busy repairing the damage with new glass. And that was the spirit I found all over London.



## THE OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTHERN DESERT, IRAQ, 1927-28

BY CAPTAIN W. J. M. SPAIGHT.

The operations carried out in the Southern Desert of Iraq from November 1927 to June 1928, to repel raiders from Nadj, are of interest because they were brought to a successful conclusion by the offensive action of the air arm alone. The enemy was similar in characteristics to the Pathan of the North West Frontier of India and the terrain resembled that over which our forces are now operating in the Middle East. Military considerations were secondary to political. While the operations were themselves of minor importance, had they not been carried out effectively Iraq might have been faced with a large-scale invasion from Nadj.

The writer's sole justification for this article is that he had the good fortune to be employed as a pilot with No. 70 Squadron R.A.F. throughout the operations.

### *Events leading up to the Operations*

The Southern Desert of Iraq has always given trouble to the rulers of Mesopotamia. The desert stretches South and West from the Euphrates valley right across Arabia. For a distance of about 300 miles south of the towns of Samawah and Nasiriyeh on the Euphrates there are no permanent dwellings. During the winter months, after the rains, there is grazing for animals and water in hollows all over the area. The desert is then visited by nomadic tribes. In the hot weather, when all pools and nallahs dry up, water is only found in occasional deep wells, grazing is non-existent and the Arab only travels for necessity or loot. On account of the shortage of water, when the frontier with Nadj was demarcated, a neutral zone was left in the extreme south which contains most of the wells in the area, in order that the inhabitants of both countries could have free access to the water.

The tribes on the fringe of the Euphrates valley are semi-nomadic and in winter move out into the desert to graze their flocks. While in the desert they have, normally, in the past had to pay money to the desert tribes to gain immunity from raids. On return to the settled districts they have objected to paying taxes to a government which could not protect them. At times

the desert tribes have actually carried out large raids into the cultivated lands of Mesopotamia proper.

The Turkish government attempted to control the desert border by the establishment of forts some way out into the desert, but they were never successful and after the loss of some forts abandoned the scheme. When the British government took over the mandate of Mesopotamia they formed a Camel corps, circa 1922, for the protection of the Southern desert, but this was destroyed by the tribes. For some years no definite steps were taken to ensure the security of Iraq inhabitants in the southern desert. In 1925 a small fort was built, and occupied by the Iraq Army, at Abu Ghar, but this only guarded a small sector of the frontier.

The rise to power of Ibn Sa'ud, the Wahabi Sheik of Riyadh, altered the situation. Since 1913 this chief had been engaged in a continuous war of conquest, the climax of which was the capture of Mecca in 1926. During this period he had gained control of almost the whole of the Arabian peninsula. A large force of fanatical tribesmen, called the 'Akhwan'—a military brotherhood—were the basis of Ibn Sa'ud's army. The Akhwan are austere Muslims who look upon Sunni and Shiah alike as heretics. The sole object of the Akhwan was war, and unless Ibn Sa'ud could keep them at war it was quite possible that they would get out of hand. In an endeavour to settle them on the land Ibn Sa'ud placed the Akhwan in colonies on his borders. The colonists of the Mutair tribe soon started raids against the Iraq nomads in the Southern Desert. Efforts by the British and Iraq governments to settle the matter through diplomatic channels with Ibn Sa'ud failed. In 1927 it was decided that a new post, farther south than Abu Ghar, would be more effective and a Fort was commenced at Busaiya, where there were some important wells frequently used by raiders.

On the 5th November 1927 this post was attacked by a body of Mutair Akhwan, whose chief was Faisul ad Dawish. The post was almost completed but had not been garrisoned. The sole occupants were ten Iraq policemen and about twelve workmen. The attack was launched after dark, the fort gates were open and some of the men were sleeping outside. All the occupants were killed and mutilated; amongst the dead was a woman, who was also mutilated. One of the policemen had been visiting a nearby encampment at the time of the attack; he at once fled towards the Iraq Army post at Abu Ghar, about 30 miles away. This man

brought the news of the attack next day; and a wireless message was sent to Shaibah but aircraft failed to locate the raiders, who had crossed the border by this time.

Killing of women is most unusual in Arabian tribal warfare and mutilation of women almost without precedent. Shortly afterwards some Iraqi shepherds were killed by raiders in the neutral zone and their dead bodies thrown down wells. The fouling of water is also most unusual in the desert. This pointed to a particularly bitter feeling among the Akhwan. The attack on the fort was a definite challenge to the Iraq government and operations had to be undertaken to establish the situation.

#### *Forces Available*

In November 1927 the defence of Iraq was the responsibility of the Air Officer Commanding. Ground forces had been reduced until only one battalion of Indian Infantry, the Iraq Army and the Iraq Levies remained. No serious trouble had occurred in the country for some years and the Air Force strength had recently been reduced by three squadrons. The following Royal Air Force units only were available:

No. 6 (A.C.) Squadron	(Bristol Fighters)	at Mosul.
No. 30 (B) Squadron	(D.H. 9-A)	at Hinaidi.
No. 55 (B) Squadron	(D.H. 9-A)	at Hinaidi.
No. 70 (B) Squadron	(Victorias and Vernons)	at Hinaidi.
No. 84 (B) Squadron	(D.H. 9-A)	at Hinaidi.

In addition there were sections of R.A.F. Armoured Cars (Rolls Royce), stationed at Basra, Hinaidi, Kirkuk and Mosul.

The Iraq Levies were stationed in the hill country on the North and North-East frontiers. The Iraq Army was not equipped to maintain large forces in the desert. The one Indian Infantry battalion (3/5th Mahratta Light Infantry) was stationed at Hinaidi. The situation in the Mosul district was unsettled, where Sheikh Ahmed of Barzan was threatening to give trouble.\* It was thus necessary to leave No. 6 Squadron and some Armoured Car sections at Mosul.

The striking force was therefore reduced to three R.A.F. Squadrons (Nos. 30, 55 & 84), to be supplied by No. 70 Squadron and supported by about four sections of Armoured Cars. The

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\* Operations were undertaken against Ahmed of Barzan about five years later.

Iraq Army was available to garrison all posts of a semi-permanent nature. No. 30 Squadron was kept in reserve and was only employed in the operations for a short period in the spring of 1928.

*First Phase. 5th November 1927—8th January 1928*

On receipt of the news of the massacre at Busaiya, No. 84 Squadron was moved to Abu Ghar and supplied by aircraft of No. 70 Squadron, operating from Shaibah. Armoured cars were sent to Busaiya and coolies were flown out by 70 Squadron to complete the fort. Active patrolling of the southern desert was carried out by 84 Squadron. Diplomatic negotiations were entered into with Ibn Sa'ud. Aircraft were forbidden to cross the border into Nadj. Steps were taken to withdraw Iraq tribes away from the border, in order to make the identification of enemy raiding parties easier. The tactics of the Akhwan, at this period, were to approach the border riding camels, perhaps two men to a camel, leading horses. At convenient wells, near the Iraq frontier, they would leave their camels, under a small guard, and mounted on horses carry out a swift raid into Iraq. They frequently travelled by night to avoid air observation. Knowing that they were safe across the border, they sometimes halted to rest either before or after the raid at a camp just inside Nadj.

It soon became obvious that Ibn Sa'ud had either no desire to stop his Akhwan raiding into Iraq or that he had no control over them. This led the British government to authorise more active measures and permission was given to pursue raiders, found in Iraq territory, across the border. Steps were taken to concentrate a force nearer the frontier. During this phase in the operations several small raids were intercepted and engaged.

*Second Phase. 8th January 1928—June 1928*

The force so concentrated was called 'Akforce.' The Headquarters were located at Ur Junction, on the Baghdad-Basra railway. Two forward bases were established at Busaiya and Nugrat Salman. No. 70 Squadron was stationed at Ur, 84 Squadron at Nugrat Salman and 55 Squadron at Busaiya. Both Nugrat Salman and Busaiya were protected by two sections of R.A.F. Armoured Cars. Busaiya Fort, now completed, was garrisoned by the Iraq Army, which had been flown out.

The Iraq side of the border was now fairly clear of tribesmen grazing their flocks but on the far side the Nadj tribes were still scattered along the whole frontier. Before effective action could



be taken against raiding parties, forming or resting, just across the border, it was necessary to clear the whole area of its peaceful occupants. Warning notices were dropped on all encampments ordering them to withdraw to a distance of four days march from the border. When these notices were not obeyed warning bombs were dropped near the camp and in a few cases it was necessary to machine gun a few of their animals. No personnel were injured and in the space of a few days a large area on both sides of the border was clear of tents.

The border was divided into two zones. The Western zone was patrolled by 84 Squadron from Nugrat Salman and the Eastern zone by 55 Squadron from Busaiya. All supplies, petrol, bombs, ammunition and spare parts for these two Squadrons were flown out, from Railhead at Ur, by 70 Squadron. A perimeter camp was constructed at Nugrat Salman, which was in time protected by a double-apron barbed wire fence, and garrisoned by the Iraq Army. This post was later partly supplied by road, Ford Vans operating from Samawah. A small Fort was afterwards built at Nugrat Salman.

The first big raid came in late January, aircraft of 55 Squadron locating them at Al Riki, on the Batin, on the 29th January. This raid was attacked by both 55 and 84 Squadrons on several occasions on the 30th January, considerable casualties being inflicted. The raiders had penetrated deep into Kuwait territory, had been attacked by the Sheik of Kuwait who had sent a force out in taxis and motors commandeered in Kuwait City, and were actually on their way back when located by our aircraft. The Sheikh of Kuwait had inflicted casualties on the raiders and had forced them to abandon some looted animals, but, unfortunately, one Kuwait car had run into an ambush and all its occupants had been killed before they could de-bus.

This raid brought out the desirability of carrying out reconnaissances over Kuwait, which until then had been considered outside the sphere of operations. Permission was obtained from the British government to operate over Kuwait and from February onwards patrols were carried out over Kuwait.

During attacks on this raid on the 30th January an aircraft of 84 Squadron was shot down, with a bullet through the radiator, within 400 yds. of the raiders. The Flight Commander (Fl.-Lt. J. F. T. Barrett) at once landed beside the disabled machine



and picked up the pilot\*, who had been flying solo. Several of the enemy were within a few paces of the aircraft, running forward and firing, as it took off.

Information was now received that large parties of Akhwan and other Nadj tribesmen, rumoured to number as many as †40,000 were massing for an attack on Iraq. H.M.S. Emerald, a modern Light Cruiser on the East Indies station, was ordered to proceed to Kuwait, where a landing party was put ashore. A Company of the 3/5th Mahratta Light Infantry was sent to Ur Junction in an Armoured Train. The Gulf Sloops, H.M.S. Lupin and H.M.S. Crocus, also proceeded to Kuwait.

Preliminary steps were taken to reinforce the Iraq garrison, if necessary, from overseas.

Low cloud for several days hampered air reconnaissance and, though intelligence reports of an advancing raid came in, it was not located till the 19th February at Jiribiyat, near Jarishan. This raiding party was attacked by both 55 and 84 Squadrons on the 19th, 20th and 21st February. Casualties were inflicted on the raiders on all three days but, unfortunately, one pilot of 55 Squadron was lost. He had been flying solo, was shot down in the middle of a party of enemy and killed on the ground, while fighting with his pistol. This occurred when all the machines of both units were scattered, carrying out low bombing and machine gun attacks. His body was brought back by Fl. Lt. Barrett of 84 Squadron. This officer located the machine and saw the body of the pilot lying on the ground, surrounded by tribesmen. Fl. Lt. Barrett had expended all his ammunition and bombs but he at once dived on the enemy several times, scattering them to cover. He then flew low round the machine and ascertained that there was no sign of life in the pilot. Fl. Lt. Barrett then flew to Shaibah, replenished his ammunition and returned to the disabled machine. By this time the tribesmen had retired; he landed and took the body of the pilot back to Shaibah in his aircraft.‡

On the 21st February Armoured Cars, which had been sent towards Al Hafar in an endeavour to intercept the raiders, captured an Akhwan, who had been wounded by aircraft action.

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\* The pilot was P/O R. Kellett, now W/Cdr Kellett, led the non-stop flight to Australia in 1938, and who has recently been decorated for leading raids against Germany.

† Arms are plentiful in Arabia, imported from the Continent through Muscat and other ports. Many come from Belgium.

‡ For this and many similar deeds, such as the rescue of P/O Kellett, Fl. Lt. Barrett was awarded the D.S.O.

This prisoner stated that Faisul ed Dawish was himself present on the raid and that the raiders would concentrate at Es Safa to distribute the loot. On this information it was decided to carry out a bomb raid on Es Safa.

Es Safa is a small hamlet in Nadj, about 100 miles south of the Iraq border. It was marked on the map, but the maps had been found to be very inaccurate, particularly those dealing with Nadj—having in the main been compiled by the reports of travellers. An R.E. officer was employed in mapping the area. A political agent was found who stated that he had visited Es Safa. It was proposed to take this man as a guide but, just before he was to emplane, he admitted that he had only visited the place as a child and that all he could remember about it was that there were some palm trees near the wells. He was therefore left behind. The raid was carried out by aircraft of 55, 70 and 84 Squadrons, under the command of S/Ldr. G. S. L. Insall, V.C., of A Flt. 70 Squadron. The Victorias of 70 Squadron each carried two 520 lb. bombs and four 20 lb. bombs, the D.H. 9-A.s of 55 and 84 Squadrons each carried twelve 20 lb. bombs.

The raid set out at dawn on the 24th February, from Rukhai-miya, a forward landing ground in the neutral zone. A Section of Armoured Cars, with tins of petrol, was sent to Al Hafar to refuel aircraft if required or to rescue machines which might be forced to land. This was necessary as the distance to be flown was not known. Es Safa, which was found to consist of a few mud huts near wells, was located and near it was a large camp. On account of the size of one tent it was decided that this was the tent of Faisul ed Dawish, the Sheikh of the Mutair Akhwan and our main opponent in the operations. The camp was bombed successfully and camels nearby machine-gunned. All the aircraft returned safely, only one having to land at Al Hafar to refuel. It was later learned, from intelligence reports, that Faisul ed Dawish had left the camp that morning, at dawn, but that his tent and household cooking pots had been destroyed. The large tent had suffered a direct hit from a 520 lb. bomb.

This bomb raid was the turning point in the operation. Just before it was launched there was a most distinct possibility of a large-scale invasion of Iraq by the Nadj tribes. The success of the raid discouraged other tribes from joining the Mutair and caused Ibn Sa'ud to make a decision. He declared Faisul ed Dawish an outlaw and started to take steps to stop raiding into

Iraq. It was rumoured that he stated that the R.A.F. had bombed Es Safa at his request, because ed Dawish had failed to obey his orders.

The excellent effect of the bomb raid was not at first realised, and it was necessary to take steps to counter large tribal raids. No. 30 Squadron was sent to another advanced base farther West at Shabicha. This base was also garrisoned by the Iraq Army, who moved by road from Najaf. A section of R.A.F. Armoured Cars was also sent to Shabicha. The Iraq Army raised an Armed Ford Van unit (Ford Vans with a Lewis Gun on a Scarf mounting in the back), which was also sent into the desert South of Najaf.

The months of March and April were quiet. Active patrolling was carried out by aircraft and a few small raids intercepted and scattered. In May Sir Gilbert Clayton (later High Commissioner of Iraq) proceeded to Jeddah to meet Ibn Sa'ud. An agreement was reached in late May and the operations came to an end. All aircraft and armoured cars returning to their peace stations in early June.

Faisul ed Dawish and other leaders afterwards surrendered to one of the Naval Sloops in the Persian Gulf; they were handed over to the Nadj authorities but, unfortunately, all died on the journey to meet Ibn Sa'ud.

#### *Tactics—Attack on Raiders*

The D.H. 9-A.s of 55 and 84 Squadrons normally patrolled in Flights of three machines, one of which was equipped with wireless and one of which was in ballast, with an empty back seat. The empty seat was to take off the crew of a forced-landed machine: in an emergency two men could be put into the back seat. It is interesting to note that of the two machines shot down very near to the enemy both were in ballast, so the only crew lost in the whole operations consisted of one man. On locating raiders the machine with wireless informed all concerned, wound in the wireless aerial, and the flight proceeded to attack. All D.H. 9-A.s carried 20 lb. bombs (the main bomb for use against personnel in the open). The first action was to attack with bombs, which were released by the pilot from a low height and who normally dived and aimed the machine by the radiator cap. When bombs had been expended, or when no bomb target offered, the machines used the front Vickers Gun in a dive attack; as the machines climbed away, normally in a turn, the back gunner fired with his Lewis Gun.

The enemy invariably fired at attacking aircraft and their standard of marksmanship was high. In spite of this few aircraft were shot down, the majority due to the radiator being punctured; all except two managed to fly clear of the enemy before landing. Several passengers were wounded, at least one seriously. Many aircraft were hit in non-vital parts. In view of the low top speed and the poor manoeuvrability of the D.H. 9 A it is surprising that more were not shot down.

Armoured Cars were always sent out to intercept large raids but unfortunately never got to close quarters. The Armoured Cars travelled enormous distances, but late information or difficult weather or terrain prevented them from coming into action against any large bodies of the enemy.

#### *Defence at Rest—Advanced Bases*

For several short periods during the operations aircraft operated from bases near the border, where no infantry guard was available. Rukhaimiya and Aqubba were two places so used. To protect the aircraft when on the ground, particularly at night, Armoured Cars were sent out. A small perimeter camp was made, normally square, with an armoured car at each corner. The car faced outwards, so that its head lights could be used if required, and a sentry sat beside the Vickers Gun of each car. If possible some barbed wire was taken out by the armoured cars; this generally permitted two strands of wire being put round the perimeter. A small trench was also dug, and all aircraft pulled inside at night. At dusk a single aircraft was sent out to search the country round, up to a depth of 50 miles, for enemy parties. It was quite possible that this dusk patrol might not see small parties of the enemy but, owing to the open nature of the ground, it was improbable that a large party would be missed. Had an enemy party been seen near camp, sentries would have been doubled. In these forward camps there was a shortage of men to man the perimeter, only the crews of aircraft and cars being present. The forward camp normally only held one flight and one section of cars. Fire power was, however, ample for, in addition to the Vickers Guns of the Cars, the flexible, back-seat, Lewis Guns of the aircraft could be used. No enemy party was seen near any forward camp and no camp was attacked.

The troop-carriers, Victorias and Vernons, carried a ground-type Lewis Gun for protection in the event of a forced landing. At night the crew were ordered to leave the aircraft and to take up a position in low ground in the vicinity.



*Equipment*

Nos. 30, 55 and 84 Squadrons were equipped with the De Havilland type 9 A, two-seater bomber. The D.H. 9 had been designed in 1916 and flew in 1917. It was found to be under-powered (it had a 230 h.p. engine), so the type was adapted to take the new American 400 h.p. Liberty engine. When fitted with the Liberty engine the type was called the 9 A. Large numbers of D.H. 9 A.s were used by the Independent Air Force, as day bombers, in France in 1918. It was a heavy, unmanœuvrable machine when new. As used in Iraq it was fitted with an extra radiator, an extra petrol tank, a spare wheel (carried outside) and carried reserve rations and water for use in the event of a forced landing. The result was that the top speed of the D.H. 9 A in Iraq was about 100 m.p.h. and it cruised about 75-80 m.p.h.

The extra weight of the tropical equipment and the thin air of summer caused the machine to have a high stalling speed. Thus it would have been hard to have found a more unsuitable aircraft for low flying attack on ground objects. The D.H. 9 A was fitted with one fixed Vickers Gun and one flexible Lewis Gun. The type was obsolete at home and was being replaced in India by Westland Wapitis.

No. 70 Squadron was being re-equipped with Vickers Victorias, replacing Vickers Vernons. Both of these types were twin-engined, troop carriers, fitted with bomb racks. The Vernon was a version of the Vickers Vimy—a night bomber which had been built to bomb Berlin in 1918. The Victoria was a modern machine, with a far greater load capacity than the Vernon, but as yet untried under tropical conditions. Both had two Napier Lion engines and about the same speed range. Neither had an automatic weapon as part of the normal equipment. The Victoria could carry 24 and the Vernon 12 passengers, including crew but excluding Pilots. Disposable load, with full tanks and equipment, was about 1,700 lbs. for the Victoria and 500 lbs. for the Vernon. Both carried petrol for 7 hours flight. All aircraft of 70 Squadron carried wireless and normally flew singly.

All Armoured Cars in Iraq were part of the R.A.F.; they were Rolls Royce cars of an obsolescent type. Their only armament was one Vickers Gun. Each Armoured Car section had some armed Ford Vans. The Ford Vans were useful for scouting and in an action the Lewis Gun could be taken from the van and fired from the ground.

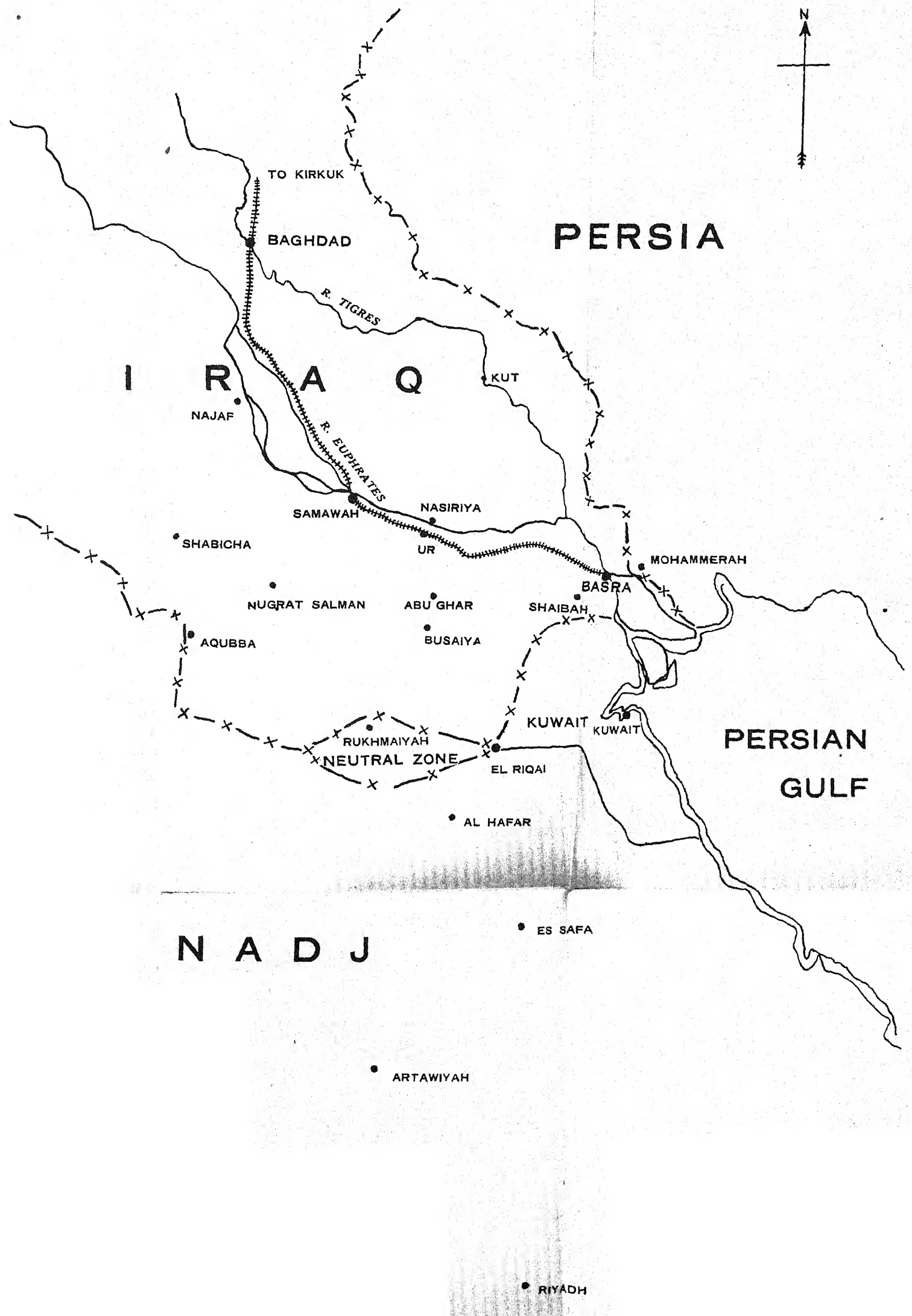


*Terrain*

The southern desert of Iraq is a stony waste devoid of marked features. The Batin, a peculiar ridge of land running down the border from just S. W. of Shaibah to Al Hafar is the only definite help to navigation. The various hillocks and hollows of the desert changed their appearance with the angle of the sun. During the early spring there is fair grazing for animals. Water is scarce and the difficulty of finding water near possible landing grounds reduced the number of advanced bases for aircraft. On the whole a forced landing could be carried out safely in most areas. The original maps of the southern desert were so inaccurate that many pilots preferred to fly without one. During the operations Captain A. Prain, R.E., produced an excellent map, on which the location of all landing grounds was correct. As, however, there were no definite land marks, pilots found their way about by the use of the compass and a knowledge of the country. There was no case of a machine becoming lost through bad navigation, though there was one incident, at the beginning of the operations, which might have had serious consequences. In November one of a flight of D.H. 9-A.s force-landed with engine trouble. The flight-commander landed beside him, ascertained that the machine required a new engine and that the machine had its full reserve rations and water, and promising to send out a new engine the next day, took off again. The machine was well inside the Iraq border and it was considered safe to leave the crew with it. The next day a Victoria of 70 Squadron went out with a new engine, led by the same Flight. They searched all day and failed to locate the machine. A further search the next day also failed. The crew was reported missing to the Air Ministry, as it was thought that raiders had found and burnt the machine. On the third day the missing machine was found. The pilot, an Australian, was furious, as he thought that his squadron had not bothered to send an engine to him. He had seen aircraft flying round on all three days and had fired all his Verey lights in attempts to attract attention. The area where this machine was located was without any feature and while the searching aircraft had never been far away from the right spot they had never flown near enough to see it on the first two days. Tests were afterwards carried out to find a more suitable colour, other than the service silver dope, in which to paint the top planes of aircraft, so as to make machines on the ground more visible from the air.



# SKETCH MAP OF SOUTHERN DESERT





No satisfactory colour was discovered, for unless an observer is almost over a grounded machine, and in which case he would be very near to it, the top plane is not discernible.

#### *Weather*

From December to February the temperature was low, with some thunderstorms and heavy rain. On occasion the wind reached gale force. At least one machine was wrecked by wind, the pickets failing to hold the ground. It was necessary to detail men to stand by all machines at night. All aircraft on the operations were continuously in the open and conditions were not good for normal maintenance and repair work. In March, April and May it became very hot, sandstorms were a daily occurrence, making overhauls difficult. One feature of these sandstorms was that, on account of the stony nature of the surface, they did not penetrate far into the desert but they were very severe in the Euphrates valley. Sandstorms, with very few exceptions, did not affect aircraft operating from the advanced bases but 70 Squadron, operating from Ur, encountered them daily. At first pilots were allowed some latitude in continuing a flight under sandstorm conditions but after several incidents, which might have ended disastrously, orders were issued that pilots on receiving a negative report from their destination landing ground would land short of the sand belt.

#### *Conclusion*

The operations were brought to a successful conclusion without a large engagement. There is, however, no doubt that had not Akforce carried out such extensive patrols and engaged all raiding parties seen (which was the large majority) a large invasion of Iraq by the tribes of Nadj would have probably taken place. After the operations, which certainly caused Ibn Sa'ud to sign the Jeddah agreement, the few minor raids carried out by the remaining rebels of the Mutair were dealt with, unaided, by the newly raised armed Ford Van unit of the Iraq Army.

The operations continued for a period of over six months; throughout this period regular long reconnaissance flights were carried out. Climatic conditions were most trying to men and machines, and the work monotonous. Aircraft crews had to be ready to take instant action at any time and crews knew that if they fell into the hands of the enemy they could expect no quarter. Long flying hours were done over country which, though easy for forced landings, was yet one over which it was difficult to find one's way. That no pilot was lost was due to the previous knowledge that all had of that desert. There is no good substitute for local experience in desert flying.



## AFRICAN MEDALS AWARDED TO INDIAN SOLDIERS

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL H. BULLOCK

Details of the African campaigns in which Indian soldiers served, and of the medals awarded to them for such services, are not easy to find. The notes which follow may be of some assistance to the regimental historian as well as to the medal collector. Medals awarded for the Abyssinian, Egyptian and Sudan wars have not been included, nor those for the Somaliland operations of 1902-04 and 1908-10.

### SOMALILAND 1888-1890

During 1888-90 detachments of the 3rd Bombay Light Infy. 17th Bombay Infy., 4th Coy. Bombay Sappers and Miners, and the Aden Troop served in Somaliland and East Africa (CADEL, *History of the Bombay Army*, p. 251). No British medal was given for this service, but it is believed that some of these men received medals or decorations from the Sultan of Zanzibar.

### MWELE 1895-96

The East and West Africa medal, without a bar but with the words "Mwele 1895-6" impressed on the rim, was granted for the operations leading up to the recapture of Mwele on 4th April 1896. The troops engaged were the 24th Bombay Infy. with which battalion a Hazara company of the 26th Bombay Infy. was serving in place of a company of the 24th detached on other duty in India; and the Indian Contingent. The latter consisted of 300 Punjabi Musalman sepoys, volunteers from regiments in India, and left India for Mombasa in October 1895 for service in the British East Africa Protectorate. I have a Mwele medal awarded to a sepoy of the 33rd Punjabis who must have been a member of this Contingent.

Some British and Indian officers of the 24th Bombay Infy. received from the Sultan of Zanzibar the Order of the Brilliant Star of Zanzibar for their services in this campaign.

### CENTRAL AFRICA 1891-1898

The Indian troops engaged in British Central Africa—now called Nyasaland—were men who had volunteered for temporary service under the British Central Africa Company. The first contingent, 70 strong, arrived in the Protectorate about July, 1891, under Captain C. M. Maguire, of the 1st Lancers, Hyderabad

Contingent. About 40 were Mazbi Sikhs of the 23rd and 32nd Pioneers, and the rest Deccani Musalmans of the 1st and 2nd Lancers, Hyderabad Contingent. Of this original party a number were killed and wounded, chiefly in expeditions against Yao chiefs, and no less than 16 received the Indian Order of Merit. Captain Maguire and three of his men were killed on 15th December 1891, and six more Indian soldiers were killed on 18th February 1892.

In June 1892 Captain C. E. Johnson, 36th Sikhs, arrived, with ten more Sikhs as reinforcements, to replace Maguire, as Commandant of Police in British Central Africa. In April 1893 Lieutenant C. A. Edwards, 35th Sikhs, went out with 100 Jat Sikh sepoy; and a few months later the Mazbi Sikhs and the cavalymen returned to India on expiration of their agreements. Later, in 1893, Lieutenant W. H. Manning brought out another 100 Jat Sikhs, who were paid for by Cecil Rhodes. In 1895 Sir H. H. Johnston came to a six-year agreement with the Government of India to employ 200 Sikhs in British Central Africa; and by 1899 there were 215 Sikhs there, seconded for three years from the Indian Army, of whom 40 were for service in Northern Rhodesia. An Indian Contingent, all Sikhs, continued to serve in B.C.A. for many years.

For various expeditions between 1891 and 1898 the Central Africa medal was awarded. In design it was exactly the same as the Ashanti medal of 1874, but had a different ribbon—three equal stripes of black, white and terra-cotta—and hung from a ring-suspender instead of from a straight bar. For expeditions between 1894 and 1898 the same medal was given, but with a straight bar and a clasp inscribed "Central Africa 1894—1898." Both types of the medal are rare and collectors find them difficult to acquire. The second issue with clasp for no apparent reason commands about double the price of the first type with ring-suspender, though it would seem that many more of the second type must have been issued.

The details of these expeditions are briefly:—

*Medal without clasp.*—Mlanje (Chikumbu), July and August 1891. Makanjira, October and November 1891. Kawinga, November 1891. Zarifi, January and February 1892. The Upper Shire, January and February 1893. Mlanje (Nyassera and Mkanda), August to October 1893. Makanjira, November 1893 to January 1894. Chiradzula, December 1893. Unyoro, December 1893 to February 1894. Mruli, April to June 1894.

*Medal with clasp*.—At and near Fort Johnston, January 1894. Kawinga, March 1895. Matipwiri, Zarafi, Mponda and Makanjira, September to November 1895. Mlozi and Mwazi, December 1895. Tambala, January 1896. Odeti and Mkoma, and Chikusi, October 1896. Chilwa, August 1897. Mpezeni, January and February 1898. Southern Angoniland, April 1898.

The following awards of the Indian Order of Merit, third class, have been traced:—

**For gallantry in action against Makanjira, 30 Oct. 1891.**

894	Sowar	Salamat Ali Khan	1st Lancers Hyderabad Contingent
895	"	Mir Murad Ali	" " "
610	"	Wazir Khan	2nd Lancers " "
2973	Sepoy	Bachan Singh	23rd Pioneers
3017	"	Bachan Singh	"
2500	"	Hakim Singh	32nd Pioneers
2577	Naik	Badhawa Singh	23rd Pioneers
881	Sowar	Kifayat Khan	1st Lancers Hyderabad Contingent

**For gallantry in action against Kawinga, 21 Nov. 1891**

846	Sowar	Kale Khan*	2nd Lancers Hyderabad Contingent
3028	Sepoy	Jagat Singh	23rd Pioneers
3039	"	Prem Singh	"
2667	"	Lal Singh	32nd Pioneers

**For gallantry at Kisungale, 15—21 December 1891**

1015	Sowar	Anwar Khan	1st Lancers Hyderabad Contingent
2558	Havr.	Nand Singh†	23rd Pioneers
1909	Naik	Isar Singh	"
1179	"	Jhanda Singh	32nd Pioneers

**For gallantry near Fort Maguire, 6 Jan. 1894**

2188	Havr.	Bulaku Singh	45th Rattray's Sikhs
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**For gallantry at Malemya Outpost, 7 Feb. 1895**

2237	Sepoy	Karm Singh	15th Ludhiana Sikhs
3041	"	Sundar Singh	24th (Punjab) Bengal Infantry

**For gallantry against Zarifi, 22 August 1895**

	Sowar	Jawala Singh	11th Bengal Lancers
2815	Sepoy	Narayan Singh	19th (Punjab) Bengal Infantry

**For gallantry against Zarifi, 27 October 1895**

2167	Havr.	Atma Singh	45th Rattray's Sikhs
259	Sepoy	Pertab Singh	35th Sikhs
470	"	Sundar Singh	" "
2680	"	Sham Singh	15th Ludhiana Sikhs
3005	"	Mahtab Singh	45th Rattray's Sikhs

\* Died of wounds, 20 Jan. 1892.

† I have this N.C.O.'s I.O.M. & medal with ring suspender.

## UGANDA 1897-98.

In September 1897 there were 289 sepoys of the Indian Contingent serving in British East Africa; and Macdonald (later Major-General Sir James Macdonald, K.C.I.E., C.B., who commanded in the Tibet Expedition 1904) had 30 Sikhs with him North of Lake Rudolf. The Indian Contingent went up into Uganda in November 1897, taking 300 or more Indian soldiers there, as well as a number of Africans. The 27th Bombay Infantry (Baluch Light Infantry) arrived at Mombasa on 12th Dec. 1897, but does not appear to have reached the front at the date of the defeat of the Sudanese mutineers at Kabegambe on 24th Feb. 1898.

By Army Order 29 of 1899 the East and Central Africa medal with clasp "LUBWA'S" was granted to all H. M. forces and allies who took part in the operations against the Sudanese mutineers from 23rd Sept. 1897 to 24th Feb. 1898. The clasp "UGANDA 1897-98" was given to those who took part in the operations in Uganda, *other than* those against the mutineers, from 20th July 1897 to 19th March 1898, *or who reached Uganda within those dates*. The Lubwa's clasp does not seem to be found alone, but only in conjunction with the "UGANDA 1897-98" clasp.

The Indian Order of Merit, 3rd Class, was awarded to Jemadar Bhagwan Singh, 1733 Sepoy Kaka Singh, and 1752 Sepoy Bagga Singh, all of the 14th Sikhs, for their gallantry at Lubwa's Hill on 19th October 1897. For gallantry at Lubwa's Fort on 11th December 1897 it was awarded to 3036 Sepoy Sahib Singh and 3277 Sepoy Phuman Singh, both of the 15th Sikhs. The latter is still alive as Lieut. Phuman Singh, Bahadur, I.D.S.M. Three other men of the 15th Sikhs also received the I.O.M. on the same occasion: 3184 Sepoy Golab Singh, 3434 Sepoy Bishan Singh, and 3385 Sepoy Karpal Singh: while Jemadar Bhagwan Singh, 14th Sikhs, was advanced from the 3rd to the 2nd Class of the Order. For gallantry at Kabegambe on 24th February 1898, 87 Sepoy Jehan Khan of the 27th (Punjab) Bengal Infantry, 1545 Naik Sham Singh of the 14th Sikhs, and 2354 Havildar Atar Singh of the 15th Sikhs received the I.O.M. 3rd Class.

## UGANDA 1898.

The East and Central Africa medal with clasp "UGANDA 1898" was awarded to the forces employed in the expedition against the Ogaden Somalis from April to August 1898. The 4th Bombay Rifles and 2 companies of the 27th Baluch Infantry



were already in the country when the expedition began, though the two companies of the 27th seem to have left for Uganda about that time. There were also 4 companies of the Uganda Rifles, who were I believe all Indians. In July 1898, 350 men of the Indian Contingent came as a reinforcement.

A number of I.Os.M., 3rd Class, were given for gallantry in this campaign, namely:

*For gallantry at Mruli, 26th April 1898*—226 L./Naik Wazir Ali, 31st Bengal Infantry.

*For gallantry at Jass Camp, 26th April, and Mruli Post, 30th May 1898*—Jemadar Bahadur Ali Khan, 1st Sikhs P. F. F.

*For gallantry near Helishid, on Lake Wama, 22nd June 1898*—756 Naik Butta Singh, 4 Bombay Rifles.

*For gallantry near Kitabu, Uganda, 9th & 10th Oct. 1898*—(All of 27 Baluch Infy.)

- 2657 Naik Yusuf Khan.
- 1765 Naik Sultan Mahomed, 30th Bombay Infy. (attached).
- 2737 Pte. Nur Mahomed.
- 262 „ Sharif Khan.
- 20 „ Ghulam Mahomed.
- 1441 „ Nur Dad.
- 2858 „ Barkatulla.
- 153 „ Shah Zad Shah.
- 767 „ Subey Khan.
- 959 „ Subey Khan.
- 188 „ Khuda Bux Khan.
- 403 „ Fazal Khan.
- 1361 „ Shazada Khan.
- 162 „ Karam Dad.
- 1132 „ Mir Firoz Ali Shah.
- 295 „ Sher Baz.
- 31 „ Nur Mahomed.

while it was announced that 296 Pte. Ahmed Khan would also have received the award had he survived.

#### UGANDA 1899.

By Army Order 254 of 1900 the clasp "UGANDA 1899" to the East and Central Africa medal was awarded to the forces employed in the operations against Kabarega in the Uganda Protectorate between 21st March and 2nd May 1899. A few members of the Indian Contingent or Indians serving in the Uganda Rifles, received this clasp, which is a rare one. I have a two-bar medal, "1898" and "UGANDA 1899," awarded to a Sikh rifleman of the Uganda Rifles.



## UGANDA 1900.

By Army Order 133 of 1902, the clasp "UGANDA 1900" to the new Africa General Service medal was given to the troops who took part in operations in the Nandi country between 3rd July and October 1900, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel T. Evatt, D.S.O., Indian Staff Corps. This clasp also is a rare one. STEWARD, in *War Medals and their History*, states that the total number of clasps issued was 5 to British officers, 1 to a British N.C.O., 268 to the 4th King's African Rifles, and 105 to Indians, giving a total of 379. I have a medal awarded to a Sikh rifleman of the Uganda Rifles.

## SOUTH AFRICA 1899-1902.

The medals awarded for the "Boer" war, though easily obtainable by collectors when awarded to British soldiers, are by no means common when given to Indians. Less than 500 Indian combatants went out to South Africa, where they were employed on non-combatant duties as orderlies and with remounts. Most of these were cavalry sowars. No less than six or seven thousand followers and other non-combatants went from India to South Africa. Many of these received the bronze Queen's medal, for which no clasps were issued. The result, so far as medals are concerned, is that the Queen's medal in silver *with clasps*, and the King's medal, are distinctly uncommon when awarded to Indians.

One Indian received the I.O.M., 3rd Class, in South Africa: No. 1306 Sowar (later Lieutenant, *Bahadur*, and I.D.S.M.) Dost Muhammad Khan, 18th Bengal Lancers, for gallantry at Hanna's Post on 30th March 1900.

Lord Roberts had a personal Indian orderly in South Africa, Daffadar Wadhawa Singh of 9th Hodson's Horse.

## BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA 1899-1900.

By Army Order 133 of 1902 the Africa General Service medal with clasp "B. C. A. 1899-1900" was given to those who had taken part in (i) operations against Nkwamba, August to October 1899, (ii) operations in North-East Rhodesia against Kazembe, September to November 1899, and (iii) operations in Central Angoniland against Kalulu, in December 1900. Some Indians received the medal: an example awarded to a Sikh sepoy of the 24th Punjabis was in the well-known Payne collection, broken up many years ago.

*ASHANTI 1900.*

Seventy Sikhs from British Central Africa took part in the advance on Kumassi and received the Ashanti medal, 1900, with clasp "KUMASSI." The Indian Order of Merit, 3rd Class, was awarded to Naik Hira Singh, 12th Burma Infantry, for gallantry near Kumassi on 6th August 1900; and Jemadar Kisson Singh, 28th Bombay Pioneers, was specially promoted Subedar for his services in this campaign. The Sikhs took part in the action at Obassa on 30th September 1900 when Captain C. J. Melliss, Indian Staff Corps, won the v.c.

*JUBALAND 1901.*

The Africa General Service medal with clasp "JUBALAND" was awarded to the troops who took part in the Ogaden Punitive Expedition, 1900-01. The Indian units were the Aden Camel Corps (52 rifles, apparently all Indians), one section of the 9th (Murree) Mountain Battery, and a wing of the 16th Bombay Infantry. The number of Indians who received this clasp must thus have been about 475. I have one awarded to a gunner of the Murree Battery, and have seen two others. Medals of the 16th Bombay Infy. sometimes come on the market in London.

*SOMALILAND 1901.*

The Africa General Service medal with this clasp was awarded (i) for operations against the Mullah in 1901 under Lieut. Colonel Swayne, Indian Staff Corps, and (ii) to those with the Abyssinian force which co-operated between 22nd May and 30th July 1901. Under 40 medals with this clasp are said to have been issued. I have an example awarded to a Punjabi Mahomedan sepoy of the 31st Punjabis, serving with the Somali Levy.

*LATER CAMPAIGNS.*

Other clasps of the Africa G.S. medal were awarded to Indian troops, but they must be considerable rarities. For the Somaliland operations in 1920 the medal with King George V's head and clasp "SOMALILAND 1920" was given to a wing of the 1/101st Grenadiers as well as to Indians serving in the Somaliland Camel Corps. I have one of the latter, awarded to a Mahomedan sepoy. I understand that about a dozen men of the 23rd or 32nd Sikh Pioneers received the rare clasp "SHIMBER BERRIS 1915," but I have never seen one.

I should appreciate authentic information of any other awards of African medals to Indian soldiers.

*ADDENDUM.*—In May 1898 one havildar, 2 naiks and 17 sappers of the Queen's Own Madras Sappers & Miners volunteered for service with the West Africa Frontier Force in Nigeria. They went and returned by way of England, being inspected by Queen Victoria at Balmoral on their way back late in 1900. One naik and 2 sappers had died in Nigeria. Two only, apparently, of the detachment received the East and West Africa medal with bar "1900"—Havildar Munisami and Naik Rajendram. The latter is recorded as having served in the expedition to the Upper Kaduna country. Muniswami's medal was sold in the Kennard collection, auctioned at Sotheby's, London, 30 June 1924.

## THE DECLINE OF FOREIGN PRESTIGE IN CHINA AND ONE VIEW OF THE POSSIBLE FUTURE POSITION AT THE END OF THE PRESENT WAR

BY OFFICER CADET B. BEAUMONT.

Although prophecy is normally a somewhat thankless task, I think most of us who have left China recently must have given the situation there considerable thought. In the majority of cases we have received some assurance from our firms that after the war is over our jobs will still be open to us. Whether there will be a job to keep open and whether we will wish to return to it must depend to a great extent on how we answer the question "what will living conditions for the foreigners be like there after the war?"

I feel it is hardly necessary to say that I have assumed that the war in Europe will be won by the allies; but although I believe that the Japanese will not decide to extend the war in the Far East to include ourselves and America, I realise that this is a possibility and I will try and consider the question in this light also

Before trying to decide what situation may result from either of these possibilities I feel that I should first define the position of the foreigner (and by that I mean the European or American but not the Japanese resident) before July 1937, how it has been modified to date, how it is likely to be modified by subsequent fighting, and, finally, what permanent settlement can be made, satisfactory to all concerned.

The position up to 1937 may be divided into two parts; first, from 1860 when the second treaty arrangements were drawn up until 1914, and, secondly, from 1914 to July 1937.

During the first period foreigners could go very much where they liked and do very much what they liked throughout China. They were protected by their extra territorial rights, by which they were subject to their own laws and could only be sued in their own courts. They were given trading rights in certain so-called treaty ports, and in the bigger cities they had concessions or settlements governed by their own elected councils. This was the period when politics were mainly directed to commercial ends, when huge fortunes were made and when the foreign governments were strong and the Chinese Government was weak.

At this time the number of foreigners living in China was small, and those who had been there for more than a few years could usually speak the language sufficiently fluently to gain some knowledge of the customs and ideas of the Chinese with whom they came into contact. In spite of the Boxer rising and other anti-foreign movements many Chinese were prepared to treat the foreigner as an eccentric but on the whole tolerable creature so that relations between the two groups were comparatively easy. Moreover the foreign position was considerably helped by the prestige of Sir Robert Hart and others, whose character and whose services had made a deep impression both on the court and on the smaller provincial officials.

The second period is covered by the years 1914-1937. In 1911 the Imperial rule was overthrown and a republic under Sun Yat Sen formed. The early years of the republic were not easy and for some time China was too concerned with its own affairs to worry about the foreigners. But with the outbreak of the European War the eyes of many Chinese were opened to the defects of the much-vaunted Western Civilisation. At the same time they were compelled to imitate many western methods in order to keep themselves supplied with the goods to which they were accustomed, but which could no longer be imported from overseas. This was a period of great industrial expansion throughout the country one result of which was to force many Chinese abroad, particularly to America, to learn to manage and control their new machines. On their return these students, while praising the material progress of the foreigner, were equally able to condemn much of his intellectual and moral background. Thus Chinese nationalism was born and in the late 1920's and early 1930's it seemed in a fair way to sweep us out of China altogether.

In August 1917 at the instance of the British and French Governments China declared war on the Central Powers, thereby inculcating in the minds of the younger Chinese a most dangerous doctrine. For the only effect of China's entry into the war was that they confiscated the German and Austrian concessions and deprived the nationals of these countries of their property and ex-territorial rights. The position of the foreigner was made worse when the Russian revolution drove hundreds of thousands of White Russians into Chinese territory where, being utterly destitute, they sank to the lowest depths of poverty: nor did their late allies, the British, French and Italians, do anything



worth while to help them. This lack of assistance and particularly the social barriers that were immediately raised against the Russian refugees made a great impression on the Chinese mind and twenty years later, at the beginning of their own war with Japan, references were made to it in the Chinese press.

However, the allied victory did something to raise the position of the foreigners in general, and the British and the French in particular, and on the surface, especially in the Concessions little seemed to have changed. In fact a great deal had changed although this did not immediately appear. The return of more and more foreign educated Chinese, the preoccupation of the European and American Governments with their own internal affairs, the "laissez faire" policy that was the result if not the intention of the Washington Conference, and above all the increased wealth and growing national consciousness of the Chinese people all tended to diminish foreign influence and increase that of the Chinese in the development of the country. Moreover the loss of the German and Russian communities instead of bringing any increased power to the rest of the foreign population only served to increase the resolution of the Chinese to deprive the remaining foreign communities of all their privileges.

The British had been the first to obtain these special privileges from the old Imperial government and even after the war British interests were still predominant throughout the country. It was therefore against them that the first anti-foreign attacks were made and it was British goods that were the first to be boycotted. Unfortunately the government at home was otherwise occupied and little attention was paid to the seriousness of the situation. That the Chinese did not succeed entirely in their aims may be ascribed as much to the decided attitude adopted by the French as to the exertions of our own government. Nevertheless much was lost both in trade and prestige, while more positively the concession in Hankow was relinquished and the naval base at Wei Hai Wei handed back. Even the relinquishment of all ex-territorial rights by the British was seriously considered.

Nevertheless before the position was entirely lost, the attention of the Chinese nationalists was diverted from the European community to the encroachments of the Japanese who had managed to acquire much of the influence and most of the trade that had been lost by the foreigners.

From 1930 onwards the Chinese Government under Chiang Kai Shek was devoting more and more of its energies to resisting Japanese aggression, and as a result was forced to suspend most of its anti-foreign activities and at times actively courted foreign help.

In spite of the loss of Manchuria in 1931, the failure in Hopeh and the Northern Provinces in 1933, and the serious communist risings in 1934 and 1935, China proper from 1930-37 was rapidly growing in strength. Foreign influence was forced to retreat more and more into the ports along the coast while the administration of the Railways and Salt Gabelle and even to some extent of the Maritime Customs fell gradually into Chinese hands. Even the biggest firms found it essential to engage Chinese advisers for their boards of directors and more and more of the senior positions were entrusted to influential Chinese. It is probable that had affairs been allowed to continue peaceably for a very few more years the majority of firms would have become semi-Chinese and in the end would have either been forced out of business altogether or else compelled to make such concessions that their eventual elimination would have been only a matter of time.

If this was clear to foreign eyes it was much more clear to the Japanese who with their ideal of a Far Eastern Empire were determined to cut short this rapid advance of industrial and financial power. Thus on July 18th 1937 that incident was provoked which led to the present war.

From this time onwards the foreigner's position has to be regarded from two points of view; one that of those communities living in Japanese occupied territory and secondly that of those who had to look towards the Chinese National Government.

In the first case it may be said that the immediate effect of hostilities was to weaken still further all foreign influence in every field.

More and more restrictions were placed on trade, foreign ships were unable to navigate the various rivers, taxes, permits and various charges were constantly being imposed to the detriment of all foreign business and to the great assistance of the Japanese. Financially the Japanese endeavoured to obtain control of both Chinese national currency and foreign exchange. Although they had less success in this field than in establishing direct commercial control they have succeeded in setting up one currency which has universal usage in all areas controlled by

their northern armies and have had less, but still appreciable, success with two other currencies. But perhaps the greatest factor in weakening foreign prestige and influence has been the successful imposition of many restrictions hampering and upsetting the general way of life of all foreign communities. This line of attack culminated in the blockade of the British Concession in Tientsin, but has existed in every part of China where foreigners lived and in many forms. Not only was all movement from place to place covered by complicated visa and passport regulations, but the ordinary daily life was constantly interfered with. Prices fluctuated widely from day to day, not only for imported articles but for local produce also; servants and other employees were arrested for no other reason than that they worked for a foreigner, while the rules regarding inoculation or vaccination, regarding motor car and other licences, regarding anything the Japanese could in some way control were constantly being changed, and at each change the maximum delay and inconvenience was carefully thought out and arranged for. The list might be continued still further, but it is sufficient to say that in a country where "face" is of great importance none of these actions of the Japanese has been overlooked by the Chinese community and although such actions are naturally disapproved of they will surely be remembered if ever any attempt is made to establish foreign prestige on its previous pedestal.

In considering foreign influence in unoccupied China it must be remembered that not more than about five per cent. of the foreign community is concerned. Yet since that five per cent. include the diplomatic body it was to be hoped that their efforts would have been able to regain much of the ground lost elsewhere. Unfortunately this was not the case.

At the beginning of the war when a European conflict was not clearly foreseen the policy of most powers was very half-hearted in its support of China. Appeasement was still the keynote of all diplomatic effort, and while Japan's action was strongly disapproved of in theory, no steps were taken to give China the help it deserved and considered it was entitled to. While private sympathies were enlisted both in Europe and America and large sums of money subscribed towards various charities in China the governments themselves did nothing to prevent Japan maintaining her full war effort.

Further, general uninformed opinion which was sometimes even quoted in the press took the line that the best thing for

foreign interests was that both sides should fight themselves to a point of exhaustion when the foreign powers could step in and by means of loans extort various concessions from both sides. The cynicism of this line of thought was felt deeply by every educated Chinese and was the cause naturally of very bitter feeling not only amongst government officials but amongst men of every walk of life. They could not believe that countries which had formed a League of Nations to protect the weaker nations against the strong and which had denounced unprovoked aggression in such strong terms could remain either apathetic or frankly self-seeking in this particular case. The League's action in regard to Manchuria had been excused and to some extent understood by those Chinese who had taken the trouble to consider the situation from the widest point of view, but the action of the supporters of the League in their present crisis could not be explained or condoned. Unfortunately on Great Britain, as the main supporter of the League, was concentrated the greater part of the Chinese Government's scorn and dislike so that it was not to be wondered at that little help was forthcoming from it to help offset the rigours of the Japanese attack on our trade and general position. But if Great Britain was the most unpopular of all foreign countries after the first year of the war there was no community that was especially popular—unless it was the Germans.

In 1930 Germany had sent to China a military mission, under General Von Seeckt, which had undertaken the training of the Chinese army and this mission had been maintained and enlarged until, in 1937, the main direction of the Chinese army was the German military mission and in the role of advisers they at first conducted the great part of the Chinese defence. It was only natural therefore that these men should be held in considerable regard by the Chinese until they were withdrawn towards the end of 1938 at the instance of the Japanese. Nevertheless, their influence was exerted purely on behalf of their own nationals and did nothing to affect the position of the other foreign communities.

British influence suffered a further and most serious setback when as a result of Japanese pressure, it was decided to close the Burma Road. The effect of this move was felt immediately throughout China. It was given the widest publicity in the Chinese press, both free and controlled, and it has been said that probably no single act of the British Government did more to



lower the general opinion of the British amongst all classes of the Chinese public. The subsequent reopening of the road has done something to improve our position, but it will need very positive action on our part to remove the distrust which is now felt for British policy in general.

At the moment it may be said therefore that foreign influence in China is at its lowest point. The British have managed to offend both sides; as far as the Japanese are concerned because "of their lack of co-operation and insincerity" and because the Chinese consider that Great Britain has only co-operated with the Japanese and done nothing to assist China. France, since the armistice, has passed out of the picture and already Japan has virtually annexed those parts of Indo-China which are of interest to her. While one would expect the position of both the Germans and Italians to have improved in the Japanese-occupied areas, this is not entirely the case and although Germans are better off than other foreigners they are still subject to most of the restrictions. In occupied China Germans appear to be treated with as much suspicion as the British but probably with greater respect. Neither side at present pays very much attention to the Italians. The only country whose position has in any way improved is the U.S.A. and then only as far as the Chungking Government is concerned. Nevertheless this friendship is probably felt mainly for the American Government, and as far as the American nationals in China are concerned they are combined in Chinese opinion with all other foreigners and treated accordingly.

Whatever may be the outcome of the general fighting up and down China there can be no doubt that for all foreign communities, wherever situated, the position will become increasingly uncomfortable and precarious. There is no reason to suppose that the Japanese will let up on their restrictions, in fact the opposite is much more likely to be the case. As long as foreign industrial and other concerns are doing work that the Japanese consider they can do themselves, even if less efficiently, so long will they continue to make every effort to secure the retirement of every foreigner and every foreign interest.

As far as the Chungking Government is concerned the outlook is almost as gloomy. In order to maintain their position against increasing Japanese pressure the Chinese have been forced to develop a nationalist outlook which is really contrary to their own nature. The "New Life Movement" was the first attempt to



instil a new spirit into the Chinese youth, but it is now only one of many such movements, and as these progress so they will produce an ever-widening barrier between the foreigner and Chinese who, as is only to be expected, is taking himself and his cause with ever-increasing seriousness. How far this barrier can be broken down is difficult to say, but the trouble is that at present only those foreigners who have been in Chungking are attempting to do this and they unfortunately are too few to achieve very much. Nevertheless, it is possible that it is the British who can do most to remove this barrier since the problems of the two countries are in many respects the same, and the mental outlook that is required to win through should in many cases be similar.

An appreciation therefore of the future relations between foreigners and Chinese depends largely on the length of the war and the ability of the foreigner to come gradually to understand and sympathise with the Chinese outlook. If some material assistance is given to China and at the same time a real attempt is made to understand them, many of the present difficulties will disappear and any settlement that is eventually made will have a good chance of succeeding. Moreover, the statements recently made both in England and America that after the war the whole position of the concessions and ex-territorial rights will be revised is most encouraging. Particularly as it seemed possible at one time that some attempt might be made now to strike a bargain with China on the basis of immediate assistance against concessions at the conclusion of the war. Any form of compulsion such as this would certainly have been deeply resented by the Chinese and probably evaded when it came to the point.

The above is to regard the position mainly from the British point of view, but it is bound to be the decision of the British and the American Governments which will finally determine the question.

This sketch also leaves out of account the Japanese whose great influence must be considered from two points of view. Firstly, in the event of a fairly immediate declaration of war on either Great Britain or America, and secondly, if they decide to continue to extend their present restrictive methods.

In the first case the whole of the control of the foreign population (not only British and American) would pass entirely into Japanese hands. For with the removal of the British and Americans the entire social and industrial system, both foreign and Chinese, of occupied China would be disorganised and this is one

very good argument against the likelihood of Japan ever openly declaring war. In the second case by the extension of their present rigid control system the Japanese will eventually exercise supreme influence and when that stage has been reached it is possible that either Great Britain or America will themselves undertake direct action against Japan. This is the argument of those who consider Great Britain will find herself one way or another fighting on the side of China.

In either event our attitude must from the beginning be based on terms of equality towards China, and any pretence that we are acting from altruistic motives would not only be stupid but dangerous. It is to be hoped therefore that the position will be faced realistically. To do so must entail the discarding of all old ideas of special privileges and rights, yet the process should enable foreign enterprise to operate freely throughout the whole country. Thus when peace comes the foreigner may not be limited to special advantages in certain detached areas but should be able to assist in the general development of China as a whole.

## SOME ASPECTS OF FOREST WARFARE

BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL N. G. PRING (A.I.R.O., M.A., I.F.S.)

This note emphasizes certain tactical and strategical considerations, and offers some suggestions for greater efficiency in forest warfare.

One of the greatest assets afforded by the forest—that of supply—including timber, firewood and numerous by-products cannot be dealt with here. Sufficient to mention that, in order to meet the enormously increased war demand from India, a Directorate of Timber Supply at the centre is ably supported by the Provinces. This essential supply is a subject best left to the experts concerned.

The various types of forest, including tropical evergreen, savannah, thorn or scrub forests of the sub-tropics, deciduous and coniferous woods of the temperate and Alpine zones, high forest and coppice, deserve separate treatment. They can, however, be combined in respect of two common factors, i.e., the cover they afford to armies and the check they impose on manoeuvre.

The Germanic tribes owed their successful resistance to subjugation by the Romans to their forests, for although the Romans possessed the finest army in the world, including superb infantry, they never succeeded in holding the country across the Rhine for any length of time.

During the thirteenth century the Mongol hosts swept across the Steppes of Russia and ravaged Poland, but although they defeated a mixed army of Poles and Germans at Liegnitz, they did not continue their drive westward because the woodlands and hilly country did not suit the tactics of these mounted hordes. The forest is essentially the infantryman's sphere.

One of the chief roles of woods throughout the history of modern war up to recent times was that of security for the flanks; two typical historical examples are afforded by the Battles of Blenheim and Malplaquet.

At Blenheim the Franco-Bavarian Army, although surprised by the decision of the Allies under Marlborough and Eugene to attack, were in a sound position with their right on the Danube and their left on wooded hills. The French Army under Tallard, holding the right and centre, was utterly defeated and it is with the left wing under Marsin and the Elector of Bavaria, opposing

Eugene, that we are concerned. The difficulty of the ground between the French and Imperial Forces had delayed Eugene's advance and his cavalry achieved little that day. Fighting at odds, Danes and Prussians were able to advance amid the bushes of the foothills and push back the French left two miles, but Marsin's Forces were not outflanked, and he and the Elector were able to retire in good order and actually rescued some of Tallard's Battalions, which had already surrendered. Without the security of the woods the French left flank would have been turned and Marsin's Army would certainly have been pursued, and probably most of them captured.

At Malplaquet woods formed both flanks of the French position. Admittedly, this offer of an excellent defensive position was a gambit which Marlborough and Eugene felt it necessary to offer in order to induce Villars and Boufflers to accept the challenge. The Allies were superior in numbers and equipment, but the French, on meagre rations, were brave and experienced fighters recognising in their leaders the foremost captains of France.

The Allies achieved their design of first weakening and then breaking through the French centre by their attack on the wood of Taisnieres. This attack and subsequent advance through the wood was achieved by one of the heaviest infantry concentrations in history—no less than 85 Battalions were employed on this wing at the commencement of the battle where the French were outnumbered by four to one at least. Subsequently, both sides drew reinforcements from the centre. On the other wing, with their left flank in the wood of Lanieres and with the able support of batteries concealed behind the small wood of Tiry, the French were able to repulse and counter-attack the Dutch and Scots. On this wing the Confederate Infantry were only saved from rout by Marlborough's cavalry.

Europé was appalled at the slaughter of Malplaquet where the Allied losses were nearly double that of the French. As a victory it proved singularly barren of results for the victors, indeed the result was to stimulate the French who retreated unmolested and enheartened. Undoubtedly, Villars had made the best of his woodland position. As Churchill states: "Resting his wings upon the woods and covering his centre with intermittent entrenchments, he presented a front which no army but that commanded by Marlborough and Eugene, with superior numbers and eight years of unbroken success behind them, would have



dared to attack. He exacted from the Allies a murderous toll of life by his entrenchments and abattis; but all the time he fought a manœuvre battle around and among these created or well-selected obstacles. By a prodigy of valour, tactical skill and bloodshed they drove him from the field. The victory was theirs but no one of the allied generals, if he could have gone back upon the past, would have fought the battle and none of them ever fought such a battle again.\*

The combination of woods and mountains still offers exceptional defence. During the Great War the wooded slopes of the Carpathians prevented the Russians from invading Hungary and allowed the Austrian Armies breathing space to reform after defeats.

The original Schlieffen plan recognised the difficulty of attacking via the Vosges, and the 1914 costly French attacks there achieved little and risked much. Judging by the events of 1940 the money and effort spent on the Maginot Line east of the Vosges could have been used to better advantage elsewhere and the densely-wooded Vosges would have formed a secure and economic defensive flank.

In wooded terrain the inhabitants play a very important role if they are of fighting stock. In the campaign that preceded Wolfe's victory at Quebec, both the French and British colonials were superior to the regulars, and undoubtedly Washington's colonials fought with natural advantage among the forests of the Eastern States. Again The Finnish Rifles were among the cream of the Imperial Russian armies and no one will deny them first rank among infantry of the world to-day.

One of the greatest difficulties experienced by the attacking force is the maintenance of contact.

During the battle of Tannenberg it was Von Francois' decision to string his Corps along the southern edge of the forest area for a distance of 50 kilometres, thus preventing the escape of the Russian Army, that achieved one of the greatest victories of the Great War. Had Von Francois obeyed orders by attacking and plunging his Corps into the forest, instead of surrounding it, he would not have gone far nor achieved much; certainly not the capture of 60,000 unwounded prisoners which fell to his share.

In March, 1916, the dispersal of the German Forces during the earlier attacks on the wooded heights in front of Verdun,

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\* "Marlborough—His Life and Times," Vol. IV.



probably saved the situation for the French; in the confusion, the Artillery of both sides was neutralised to the great advantage of the defenders, who were able to reform and reinforce their broken line.

Turning to small scattered areas of woodland, one should contrast the very costly frontal attacks during the Somme campaign on Mametz, Dellville, and High Woods, etc., as compared with their recapture in the 1918 Spring advance. Infiltration tactics obviously exclude frontal attacks on woods where this is avoidable.

For artillery, speaking generally, the forest favours defence. Targets are hard to locate and the difficulty of observing is much greater. In high forest the wastage of fire power through shells or splinters hitting timber is appreciable. The greatest handicap in offensive warfare is the uncertainty of the accurate location of targets and of the results of a bombardment. Wire and well-sited trenches can be kept invisible from the air. The creeping barrage loses effect owing to bursts on trees and if followed up closely is likely to cause casualties to the attackers. After the initial bombardment, the dispersal of the attackers in the wood and the difficulty of observation enhances difficulty of controlling indirect fire, and it is better to support the advance with mortars and light pieces that can be brought up with the infantry.

In spite of a great preponderance of guns, including French artillery, the American Army's gallant and strategically important advance through the forests of Ardennes in 1918 was one of the most costly attacks of the Great War, because the observers could not locate wire and machine-gun nests hidden in the woods.

The defence will rely chiefly on direct fire by well-concealed light pieces. Wire and skilfully felled trees will force the advance into covered zones.

For anti-tank work, the defence will do best to rely on light high velocity quick firers capable of being sighted and fired by one man. Above all he must be able to aim quickly because if he does not get the target quickly, the target will get him. The soundest solution would be to mount the anti-tank guns in tank-lets capable of manœuvring within the forest and affording protection against machine-guns.

The check to rapid manœuvre within the wood applies particularly to cavalry and armoured cars. The attackers are subjected to the risk of ambush, enforced concentration along vulnerable lines and general lack of cohesion. In the case of

tanks, assuming that the defenders have the necessary armament, the advantage lies with the defence. Armoured cars and tanks have, however, the several advantages of speed, range and, for their crews, comparative immunity from physical exhaustion which reduces the property of woods as security. After a long outflanking march your cavalry would meet his opponent fresh for the charge. Now the same distance can be covered in less than an hour, so that even though the defenders have the advantage of interior lines a constant guard by them on their flanks and rear is necessary. The chief danger to the defence is encirclement. It is essential for them to maintain constant contact with the flank outside the forest, to prepare for counter-attacks to assist those flanks and to have plans to withdraw so as to avoid encirclement in case their flanks retire. The effect of enfilading fire from the forest on forces advancing along the flanks is very great. Instance the deadly effect of the fire from the edge of the woods at the Battle of Wynendael (1708). Webb's task was to prevent a much superior French force under La Motte from seizing the precious ammunition convoy marching from Ostend. La Motte, debarred from marching round the woods if he were to reach the convoy in time, took the gap through the woods. Webb posted battalions in the coppice on one side and in the high wood on the other in advance of his main force with which he held the thousand-yard base of the gap between the woods. Webb, who had no artillery, and practically no cavalry, had to endure a three-hour bombardment before La Motte advanced in great depth. Fired on from both flanks as well as from the front, the slaughter was swift and heavy and the repulse of the French was utter. Were the same tactics employed under modern mechanized conditions, including the column, the tempo would change but the same result might be expected.

Within the forest the natural advantage of the defence is less conducive to counter-attack and the tendency of defenders sitting pretty is to stay put. The best opportunity for counter-attack inside the wood occurs when the attackers reach close quarters and following a withering fire.

For the purpose of attack or counter-attack the great value of woods lies in their use as cover for assembly. Many instances of successful charges by forces concealed in or behind woods can be quoted. A classic example was the skilful deployment and disposition of Stone-wall Jackson's Brigade, when he rushed up to save the critical position on Henry Hill during the Battle of Bullrun. It was his Virginian Brigade's subsequent charge from

the woods that gained the victory for the Confederates, in this the first battle of the American Civil War.

The use of mustard gas or other heavy gases is feasible. During the Abyssinian campaign the Italians used it with marked effect, but against an enemy quite unprepared; the use of gas on a large scale in forest areas would be wasteful and it would be better to confine its use within the forest to known or suspected targets such as located batteries, road junctions and assembly points, etc.

Of the other ground weapons the mine is probably the most important and, combined with trenches and tank-traps, will make an advance through forest very costly.

Over vast expanses of tropical jungle and in mountain forest where transport is limited to boats, pack, sledge or portage, supplemented in future no doubt by aircraft, the foot-soldier and his rifle come into their own.

With the development of the air arm, completely new conditions obtain, which appreciably alter the values attributable to ground warfare. From the ground a spinney or even a belt of roadside trees hides all behind it, whereas from the air the cover is limited to the forest and is no longer afforded by clearings. On the other hand in many cases woods afford the only adequate cover from aerial observation and, where this is so, their value increases.

By night concealment from parachute flares is a valuable asset to troops encamped and on the march.

From the ground, fire is directional and is limited to the range of weapons situated in enemy territory. The aeroplane can attack from the direction most suited and there is practically no range limitation. The fire hazard increases and is likely to prove a menace during dry seasons in many kinds of forests, particularly among pine, and other conifers. Frequently, the only way to extinguish a forest fire is to counter-fire, and for this experience is necessary. Owing to this new danger from the air, it will probably prove necessary in many areas to burn the ground or clear it of inflammable material around gun positions, encampments, etc., and along forest roads.

On the ground assaulting troops must get through the forest or round it past the defenders. From the air troops can be dropped behind the enemy's lines and can take advantage of the forest to lie up until the time is ripe to participate in an attack.

Man has been waging war by land and by sea for thousands of years. Aerial warfare is really only just beginning and it would be foolish to try and draw conclusions at this stage. Certain it is that, even in huge forest tracks, the side having superiority in the air will have a tremendous advantage. Having gained complete air superiority, artillery fire on batteries and camps in clearings can be accurately directed, while further back bases and communications can be bombed and machine-gunned. Apart from purely offensive action aircraft is invaluable for contact and supply purposes in dense jungle country where lines of communication are few and difficult.

Finally, although observation and exact location may be impossible, aerial photographs, studied at leisure by experts, reveal a great deal that the eye cannot detect. Combined with a scrutiny of existing maps, including large-scale forest maps, aerial photography will play an important part.

Lee's and Jackson's operations in Virginia serve as an excellent example of skilful leadership where good use was made of the forest in attack and defence, but perhaps the finest example is afforded by Lettow-Vorbeck's East African campaign. This indomitable leader fought out the Great War, unreinforced throughout, against stronger forces constantly reinforced by men and material. The bush was his only ally and saved him from being rounded up on numerous occasions but he made the fullest use of it for attack, gaining several notable victories. Aggressive to the end, he had successfully re-invaded German East Africa, from which he had been driven, when the Armistice forced him to lay down his arms.

Mobility and the aggressive spirit count just as much in forest warfare as elsewhere, and it is the greatest mistake to regard the forest merely as a natural fortress. A skilled leader will use his woods for defence when opportune, but under modern conditions he must be ready for strategic advance or retreat as the occasion demands. He will use the cover they afford for protection, particularly from aerial attack and observation and for concentrations preparatory to surprise attacks. When he attacks a forest position he will employ infiltration methods at the most vulnerable points, possibly from the flank or rear, certainly with every available artifice to avoid unnecessary casualties.

Suggestions are offered as follows:

*Personnel.*—The Empire can call on men from many of her Dominions with experience of the forest and in India from among the Gurkhas, Garhwalis and Punjabis of the Himalaya are many



who are at home in the jungle. Whenever possible, use them for forest warfare. A number of Reserve or Emergency Officers are available from the Forest Service and large timber firms. Some of these will be needed as engineers or for supply services, but the remainder can most usefully be employed with units engaged in forest warfare.

*Information.*—Most countries with forest services have brought their Crown forests and many private estates under systematic management with working plans. These plans should contain much information of military value, including maps showing roads, paths and buildings not usually shown on ordnance surveys. The body of the plan also contains much that will be useful regarding local conditions, labour supply and information on the type of wood and the density, clearings, etc. All working plans are written in a regular sequence from which useful information can easily be extracted by a forester. Foreign working plans are easily obtainable in normal times.

Some of this information might be extremely useful to the R.A.F. for reconnaissance and raids. Where regular working plans or schemes are not available, reports and surveys of timber cruisers may contain valuable information.

*R.A.F. Co-operation.*—Prepare landing grounds and communication facilities where possible in advance. In dense jungle country, such as parts of Burma and West Africa, rivers are the highways and reaches suitable for landing need to be selected and improved.

Post liaison officers to the R.A.F. as early as possible so that effective co-operation between ground and air forces is established without delay.

*Training.*—Specialist training in forest warfare may not be feasible but woods could be included during tactical training and musketry practice. This is practical in most hill cantonments.

*Rehearsal.*—Whenever possible rehearse before an attack with the units actually employed. Let those who contemplate the planning of extensive night operations first try walking across country in a forest at night without lights.

*Research.*—In an Article entitled "Military Research," *Journal of the United Service Institute* of July, 1940, AUSPEX draws attention to the need of such research. The battle grounds in Finland, Norway, France and Belgium included much forest and the writer is convinced that a study of the technique employed by the various combatants would prove highly profitable.



## DEMOCRACY AND THE TRAINING OF LEADERS

By "HOPLITE"

The musings in the following paragraphs perhaps more properly belong to a soap box in Hyde Park setting rather than to the formal medium of printers' type. Free speech or writing however being one of the blessings of Democracy, it has been submitted as an article for your hospitable journal.

It is the unfortunate defect which accompanies all the blessings of Democracy, that elected governments do not seem to be able or willing to educate the electorate, and to save the nation from mass ignorance, and mass neglect, to support in sufficient time, military measures for self-preservation.

The events of the last few years in our own country have amply proved the truth of this contention. We no doubt all have our own ideas as to whom to apportion the blame for this state of affairs, but the fact remains, a country gets the government it deserves, and the governed cannot entirely disown responsibility.

It is a debatable point as to what form of Democracy our constitution represents. Many aspects of it are more in the nature of a plutocracy or bureaucracy. Whatever the constitution is at present, it must be conceded that the Old School tie class forms a large element in it. It is interesting to note some statistics concerning the composition of our present House of Commons. From a cursory survey of its members, the proportion of old school ties to non-school ties is about 60 per cent. to 40 per cent. A further scrutiny divulges the fact that of the 60 per cent., about 70 per cent. to 75 per cent. support the tie of one particular school. An analysis of the House of Lords would probably disclose a very similar proportion. What with the Peerage, Beerage, Coy. Directors, and Trade Unionists, the nation of shopkeepers seems to have had the government it deserved to mislead it. If ever a second chamber untrammelled by vote-catching consideration and party whips, had an opportunity to step in with a public-spirited policy, the present one had and missed. Before suggesting any remedies, it is advisable to try to clarify our minds as to what is

meant by Democracy. We as a nation are rather easily mesmerised by slogans and catch-phrases, which seduce the mind from really analysing the implications and complexity of the subject involved. It is necessary to crystalise ideas on the ideals for which the English peoples are struggling against the Axis and other ideologies, so that at the end we may continue to follow these ideals, and do not allow war weariness, and the lip service of politicians to deflect us from our true aims, and from maintaining that position of leadership to which our present efforts entitle us.

The slogan of Democracy, "Government by the people, for the people" is itself misleading. It produces a policy of giving all to the people and taking nothing from them; a policy which if carried to a logical conclusion would produce complete selfishness and independence. The slogan should be, "Government by the people for the general good of their country or empire."

Government by the people must place certain obligations on the people, for example a more active study of, and participation in politics. One of the means of giving the masses a chance of taking a more active and intelligent share in government is by a more liberal and moral education.

Another remedial measure will be reform of both Houses of Parliament. A third the creation of an Imperial Cabinet for defence and foreign policy. A fourth will be the realisation of what this empire means, and the responsibilities it involves. Hitherto knowledge and interest among the majority of people at home has been disgracefully scanty. Now, when a crisis has come, its significance is being realised and paid homage to. This fervour must not be allowed to wane.

A Democracy naturally requires leaders; and among all its departments the proper selection and training of leaders for its military forces is most important. With the progress of democratic institutions the field of selection will widen, and this widening process will be one of the objects of democracy and progress will be dependent to a large extent on educational facilities. Although in any social organisation, the talents and capabilities of individuals are, and will always be of varying degree, we must ensure that the system of education gives to as many as possible the opportunity of developing and exercising these capabilities to the fullest extent.

The ship of state needs, however, very expert navigating, and drastic changes in staff are liable to impair its stability.

In this connection one or two recent incidents vis-a-vis leaders and the army have given cause for considerable reflection.

In one case we hear of the Army Council expressing serious displeasure to an officer who championed the Old School tie element as the natural leaders; in another edict we learn of the abolition of the W.O. Class III as a platoon leader.

It is gradually being realised that what might be termed over-Democratisation in the French Army, was a contributory cause of its spectacular collapse.

Hitherto most of the officers of our Army have come from the big Public Schools; and we know that the average man among British other ranks generally looks up to the wearer of an old school tie. But the old school tie may vanish as a consequence of the war, because of the inability of parents to pay for the privilege of their sons earning one.

It is admitted that the Public Schools have produced good material, but it is considered that a better and higher average could have been achieved in return for the money expended and the advantages enjoyed.

Furthermore, it can be said in all fairness that most Public Schools have failed to adjust themselves to the pace and intensity of modern life, and to the conditions introduced by the stupendous inventions of the last 25 years. These have been on a scale greater than has been witnessed at any other epoch of the world's history. I refer to the aeroplane, wireless, the internal combustion engine, the cheap press, and the cinema. These inventions have far outdistanced our moral and social development. Many changes will be forced upon us, but at the same time care must be taken lest the thoughtless discarding of the past may upset essential balance.

As a first step Public schools will probably have to be subsidised by government, on condition of their receiving a certain number of state or secondary school students. Education curricula must be revised, and in the process teachers must be taught how to teach. Most presume on an intuitive or self-inspired ability; it generally fails to inspire the classes.

Both in Public School and Army teachings a great many of the efforts are amateurish, with the results that only amateurs are produced. There has been too much of the "drawing stumps during the heat of the day for a gin and bitters" attitude. It is not even essential in diplomatic circles where it is prevalent,

though this does not mean that the Englishman must be denied his flagon of ale at proper times.

An important factor of the military side of the picture will be the future composition of the Army. The present regimental distinctions will have to disappear gradually. They still involve too much class snobbery, which is undoubtedly nourished by the Old School tie system. If conscription or a form of it remains, and it is desirable that it should, the acute forms of this infection will gradually disappear. Its disappearance will involve profound issues, and tend to undermine one of the foundations of morale, namely a highly developed *esprit-de-corps*, and something will be required to replace it. Regiments will be known by their numbers, with perhaps a territorial suffix; they will be dressed similarly. Exceptions might be made in the case of the Brigade of Guards and Highland regiments, provided the latter were wholly composed of Scots.

In olden days units were largely on a territorial basis, both in the British and Indian Army. Men of one platoon were largely composed of men from one village or district, and known to each other from childhood. There was a territorial *esprit-de-corps*, and a morale fortified by an unwillingness to let down one's pals.

It is suggested that we shall again have to concentrate more on the territorial aspect. Present conditions of life wherein people herd in large cities are a comparatively new phase of civilisation, to which society has not fully adjusted itself.

The danger which all in towns at home are now sharing, and the comprehensive A.R.P. measures which are in force, will result in the extension of the communal and civic spirit, and in the demise of the selfish "every Englishman's house is his castle" tradition. This will help to foster the democratic spirit.

The next problem concerns the appointment of officers to regiments in the Army under these new conditions. Officers in the British Army as a general rule should be appointed on a territorial basis; but this cannot apply to officers joining the Indian Army. Family connections might constitute a claim for appointment to a specific regiment in both services; and where these do not exist appointments should be made according to the best interests of the service. The system of touting at Sandhurst must cease. In both services choice of a regiment might be offered to a limited few of the most efficient candidates; their order of merit being decided by normal methods. It may be contended that



these reforms will prove a serious obstacle to the recruitment of officers. This will be overcome, it is hoped, by alterations in our educational system, and by the progress of democratic principles in other institutions. If not, other means can be devised to overcome it.

Another measure of reform will concern the training of the leaders. The field of selection will have been widened either by the dilution of the Public Schools with the secondary school element, or by the wholesale amalgamation of the two. It is probable too that some form of conscription will be retained in the British Army, and this will further widen the field.

It has been stated in a previous paragraph that school curricula should be revised, and be of a more mind-broadening character. It is not proposed to enter into a discussion regarding the merits of classics as a part of school training. It suffices to say that with the introduction of new subjects some old ones may have to be discarded wholly or partially.

Education or the acquiring of knowledge may reasonably be subdivided into three categories:

- (a) Subjective.—Reading, Writing, Arithmetic. The training of the mind how to learn, and training an individual to do a thing he necessarily does not like doing at the time when it has to be done.
- (b) Informative.—Items such as Geography, History, Sociology, Natural Science and Ethical and Moral training.
- (c) Professional or Occupational.

At present the average boy at an average Public School passes his school certificate between the age of 16 or 17, after which he can continue his academic activities in a recumbent attitude, presumably also continuing to develop character, but without much expert assistance. Few Public Schools offer facilities for professional or occupational training. It is at this period that some form of conscriptive work should be introduced.

As regards the Sandhurst training, this has been a compromise, with the object of trying to combine a 'varsity and military education within the space of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  years; obviously an impossibility, even with a staff of professional teachers. A broader education is desirable, but it can only be achieved satisfactorily by lengthening the period to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  or 3 years.



Proceeding further, and surveying instructional facilities in the Army. It should be a principle to aim for, that in the British Army the platoon commander should be a serjeant or a W.O. Class III, if you like. Although the W.O. has been given up, failure for all time must not be admitted. It may have been due to class snobbery, insufficient training for the job, or like the attempts at Indianisation, having been designed to satisfy a demand but implemented by a method which was bound to prove unsuccessful. If Sandhurst cannot turn out officers capable of training a platoon and its leader up to platoon tactics then there will have to be Army Schools for platoon commanders in the British Army. In the Indian Army the establishment of a V.C.O.'s school for platoon commanders is most desirable, primarily on account of the comparative fewness of British officers in a battalion.

The infantry officer has been taken as an example throughout, as the infantry's work is more difficult both as regards learning and teaching, than the other arms, in which technical efficiency, which can be put to the test in peace, counts so much.

A further stage in an officer's career should include a course at a Coy. Comds. school. The reiteration that this is a C.O.'s duty seems a cheap method of passing the baby to one who certainly in the Indian Army cannot do it so economically from a time and labour point of view, or so thoroughly as a school.

It is from a Coy. Comds. school that Staff College students should be selected. Those selected would carry on with a graduate course.

A Senior officers school must be retained as the final means of instruction for regimental officers.

Finally, we come to the provision and training of officers for the expansion of the Indian Army in the present crisis. In the event of the conflict being protracted over many years, and visualising the British Empire and the Americas ultimately having to be prepared to fight against Japan, the man-power of India must be made full use of. The men are there, the great need will be for officers. The resources of the universities in India must be exploited fully. There should be started in each, as soon as possible, military training cadres. These cadres should be formed of regular officers who had previously gone through a special course of training for this purpose. The object of these cadres will be to select suitable leaders to propagate military ideas and methods of teaching in the University. The provision of these

regulars will constitute another drain on regiments which will have to provide the officers. The British officer element may have to be reduced, as low as four or five in a regiment.

Administration, therefore, must be simplified by bringing organisation on to a field-service basis throughout India.

The turnout of the officers training schools must be further increased, and schools established for training prospective instructors.

As the war progresses, there will be an increasing number of officers who may be suitable only for the more sedentary jobs. Many of these might usefully be employed as instructors in training establishments; they will have the added advantage of having had war experience.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### "LETTERS BETWEEN A BRITISH OFFICER AND AN INDIAN GENTLEMAN"

September

My dear "Y",

When we were discussing Indian culture some time ago, I mentioned a problem in which I was interested, and you very kindly said you would put it to an Indian friend of yours, who was interested in matters cultural. So here it is:

I recently spent two years in the Indianizing battalion of my regiment. I have always been a keen advocate of the Indianization of the officer cadre of the Indian Army, and I, therefore, had a most interesting time. There were problems of many kinds. But one of the most difficult to my mind was that of maintaining and stimulating the young officer's interest in the culture of his own country. I realise of course that many British officers—probably a big majority—see no problem in this. A few officers to whom I have put the point, have replied: "And a damned good job too—anyway what culture is there in India?" But I am not satisfied. So far as military science is concerned, the young officer must turn to British books, unless he reads French or German. I never felt happy, however, to see their reading consisting wholly of "Punch", "Blackwoods", "Illustrated London News", "The Tatler", and "The Statesman" or "The Times of India"; and perhaps the odd English novel from the library. It seemed to me that if all their intellectual food, so to speak, was European, there was a danger of their becoming more and more alienated from their own country and its culture. That would be tragic from the Indian point of view. Not only will it lead eventually to a sense of frustration in the individual, but from the nation-building point of view, the remarkably valuable contribution of these men will be lost. I say "remarkably valuable" deliberately, because I feel that in their training and service they acquired that self-disciplined and social and religious toleration, which is lacking in Indian youth generally.

Well, am I right, or am I wrong? If I am wrong, then there is no problem. If I am right, then how can the intellectual diet be adjusted to a more healthy balance? What Indian papers and journals are there that can be taken by an Officers' Mess? What

authors are there, other than Tagore, whose works they should be encouraged to read? What other methods are there by which the educated young Indian officer can retain what is best in the tradition and culture of his own country, whilst imbibing what is useful and beautiful in European thought? Politics, of course, must be barred. The gladiator may be a national tragedy. The political gladiator would be a national disaster.

Yours ever,  
"X".

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October.

Dear Colonel "X",

My friend "Y" has shown me your letter, and I would like to have a shot at answering your problem.

"Anyway what culture is there in India?" What a comment! But I fear that having regard to the life led by most British military officers of the Indian army, no other question could have been expected. It is difficult to define culture. The best set of definitions of culture I have so far come across is in a book which unfortunately is out of print now. It is "Culture and Anarchy" by Matthew Arnold. Considering the level of culture that obtains in the English Public Schools it is not surprising that the book has gone out of print. There has been recently a great deal of revival of interest in 'culture' in the British universities, led mainly by T. S. Eliot and Dr. Leavis George. I am referring to English authors and English literature, firstly because they give me an apparatus to use in the question you set, and secondly because you will understand this apparatus better. Culture in short is awareness of the value of one's tradition as it has been handed down. It presupposes on the part of the cultured individual the capacity for value-judgments. Are Indian military officers aware of this tradition and have they capacity for such judgments? I know about 20 of them who used to be with me in college and later in England, and I am afraid that with one or two exceptions, they have not. But in this do they differ from other Indians? I doubt it. Most Indians, as a result of a deplorable educational system, have little or no culture. A cultured man has good taste; for this there is no *substitute*. Most Indian officers have no taste except for good living and alcohol. They are completely divorced from the cultural traditions of their country. They are not good thinkers because they do not possess a good mental apparatus. Most of them are good



healthy animals because they feel that that is in keeping with the tradition of the British Army.

But what is this tradition of India of which they should be aware? Indian tradition in its superficial aspects is rather ugly. It is a pity that the people who stress it are often old-fashioned, dogmatic, sectarian and in many ways unpleasant old fogeys. That puts off the healthy younger set. But as I said, a cultured man is not only conscious of his tradition, but also has a capacity for value-judgments. The old-fashioned set have no value-judgments but only knowledge of their tradition which is of no use to anybody. It is easy to be fond of the French tradition or of the rather less attractive English tradition. In short, it is easy to be fond of the European tradition, but to be fond of Indian culture demands an effort. This can only be done by means of right education from childhood. What Indian army officers, and in fact a large number of westernised Indians cannot reconcile in their minds, is a semi-western mode of living, dress and training, with a proper understanding of the Indian tradition. Since they do not like the old-fashioned set who love it, they begin to hate the Indian tradition as something stupid, conventional and unclean.

Indian tradition is not unified. In certain essentials it is, but in detail it varies from province to province, and certainly shows up different aspects among Hindus and Muslims. This means that it is not easy to understand and handle. This is another difficulty. Perhaps I could summarize it as follows:

A knowledge of Indian History, not the school text-book history which catalogues battles won and lost, but Indian social and economic history; and of some classics including Ramayana and Mahabharata and Kalidas on the one hand and Persian poets on the other; sufficient knowledge to be able to derive genuine pleasure from Urdu and Hindi poets such as Ghalib, Mir, Iqbal, Surdas, Kabir, etc.; sufficient patience to be able to read Hindustani prose-works of the 19th century which are neither thrillers, nor best-sellers; an interest in Indian architecture, frescos and mural paintings, etc.; and sufficient patriotism to enjoy Indian festivals. Indians who possess some of these qualifications would also take to the best in Western culture and literature. Alternatively, Indians who have learned to love the best in Western culture and literature would like some of these things. But how can those who cannot be called educated, cultured and intellectual turn to anything good, whether Indian or Western?



With Indian officers it is not merely that they are not aware of the Indian tradition, but that they are not aware of any tradition. In short, they are not cultured. To read thrillers, best-sellers, or to be keen on films, etc. etc., or to derive real enjoyment from "The Tatler," etc., except only as a pastime when one is very fatigued, is what I may call anti-culture.

But there—India's educational system and the whole outlook of the Indian Army are non-cultural.

What are the magazines and books they can turn to: some Urdu, Hindi, and Persian poets, Munshi Prem Chand and Iqbal, Tagore, books on Indian architecture and paintings, Indian music as a hobby, Radha Krishna's books on Indian philosophy, Indian Economics: of magazines—unfortunately very few.

In a brief letter like this, I cannot say more. Are my ideas at all helpful?

Yours sincerely,

"Z"

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**LETTER FROM A BATTERY COMMANDER WITH THE  
B. E. F.**

*[By the courtesy of a correspondent there has come into our hands this interesting footnote to history. The writer was serving with a Field Regiment in India in June, 1939. He went home on leave and, at the end of August, joined a Field Regiment in England. He went to France in early September, 1939, and he is still serving with his Regiment "somewhere in England."—Ed.]*

One saw so little of the thing as a whole that even now events that happened in the battery and regiment are still coming to light.

First of all, I'd like to say that the B. E. F. was never once beaten by frontal attack. Many counter-attacks were made successfully at the point of the bayonet. What was happening the whole time was that the French and the Belgians were being pushed back on either flank.

At the start everything went according to plan and we took up our position on the N. E. of Brussels. Actually we got our first taste of fire the evening before we got there, when 4 M. E.-110 came over our hide and machine-gunned us (no casualties on either side), but we were rather afraid they would come back later and drop some bombs, which, thank goodness, they didn't.

I can't remember the exact date on which we fired our first round in anger, but we had our first misfortune that evening.

We had to send a F. O. O. off at speed in our armoured O.P. and in trying to avoid a mass of refugees the driver wrote it off. A great pity as it would have been invaluable later. Our first march back by night was a bit trying. Maps a trifle out of date and all sorts of bypasses around Brussels not marked. Parts of the city burning furiously and the odd shell coming over. Luckily the whole time we had a moon as all the marching was done at night.

The first part of the withdrawal was according to plan—and then the French gave way on our right and things went pretty quickly. About this time (after the first move) we were in one position for over 48 hours—the longest time we were ever in one place till we got to the beach. Here we got our first real taste of shelling. They found my Bty. H.Q. but only managed to kill four cows in the field outside the farmhouse. One cross-roads on the way to R.H.Q. was particularly unhealthy. We did a longish march that night, meeting our guides about dawn, who led us by a very tortuous way to selected positions. (You'll see the reason for this explanation shortly.) That day we did a fair amount of shooting, but had very vague information about the enemy. We also milked the cows and made butter and slew several pigs which we took along with us. (Anything—pigs and cows—we couldn't take, we shot.)

Just at dusk that evening the adjutant arrived in a great hurry on a motor-bike saying I was wanted at R.H.Q. He led off at a great pace, me following on a 8-cwt. truck. Orders were to withdraw immediately—Boche had broken through on our left (quite close). I got on the 'phone and had just got as far as "Cease-firing" when the line went. So I started off back to collect the Bty. Then came a most frightful nightmare for two hours nearly. Could I find the Bty. position? Could I hell?... (It was dark then.) All I had to guide me was a farmhouse on fire which I knew was about 800 yards from the Bty. I went around and around that farmhouse but not a sign could I see. Then I got on a main road and I saw, coming towards me, lots of our own troops, who had had a pretty gruelling day. I had to go on because I knew the way I'd come from was wrong. Then to a cross-roads in a town with a signpost. I didn't stay long looking at the signpost as they had the place pretty well taped and there were many corpses lying about there. I eventually found them. The words "Cease-firing" had been just enough to get them out of action and formed up on the road.

I was two hours late at the starting point but that didn't matter much. It was from that position, I think, that we put down a Regimental concentration on a factory where a lot of Boches had been forming and whence most unpleasant mortar fire had been directed on our infantry. It was a grand sight I'm told and the infantry in the front line stood up and cheered like mad. Twenty-four 25-pounders putting over stuff at rapid or intense for 10 minutes makes a bit of a mess at the other end. They are damn good guns and we had absolutely no trouble with them. In the next 36 hours we came into action four times—by which I mean we had to move four times and I may say I was pretty tired by then—no sleep for nearly three days and three nights.

By this time we were back near Lille, near the positions we had been spending months constructing. I think I managed to get a bath somewhere here and a few hours' sleep.

Then came a notable day, May 26th, when we were as good as told that we would probably never get away. We had heard that before, but this time it was looking pretty sticky, and we were told to send off certain officers and N.C.O.s to train the next B.E.F.

Next day was a red-letter day. It was a thing that every gunner officer dreams about. Sitting in a wonderful O.P. (though rather obvious) and seeing the Boche going across your front. I think I got amongst them a dozen times that morning and literally must have put hundreds out of action. I had two points accurately registered. I saw the Boche coming and gave "Tgt P.B. 2, fire by order, 5 rounds gun-fire"—and as they passed a certain point—"Fire"—then followed them up till they got into a wood, and plastered the wood for a bit. We had plenty of ammunition then, and had had the whole time, till towards the end. I shall never forget my Bt. captain, coming up to me one night, just after we had come into action, and I was going to try and get some much-needed sleep, and saying that 27 3-ton lorries were arriving full of ammo. . . . and I was the only person who knew how to get to all three troops. Well, to continue—during that same morning, I suddenly saw a Boche battery open up, 5.9" I think. I could see one gun through a telescope, and ranged on it. About the third round of fire for effect landed amongst the ammunition and it went up in a sheet of flame. Then I strafed the farm buildings where I thought the other

three guns were and set them on fire. That battery did not fire again.

Our next stop was, I think, at the famous "Plug Street," and then they sent us—a Field Regiment—on what appeared to be a suicide trip—to go posthaste to Dixmude and hold the bridge there. Information about the enemy—Nil. In fact it was quite probable that they were there already! We should get there about 2 a.m. and no infantry could get there until 6 a.m. at the earliest. Just as we had about arrived there we were told that the bridge had been blown and that we need not go. What had happened was that a troop of cavalry had arrived at one end of the bridge as some Boche arrived at the other. They shot them up and blew the bridge.

Then we moved on to the Dunkirk area—actually about 12 miles E. of it. We came into action, then out again, and that evening came into action amongst the sand dunes. That night I got my first good night's sleep as I knew we could not move back any more. Next morning the Boche were within range and we stayed there for, I think, four days while thousands were embarking. Amn. was a bit short now. In the earlier stages one troop got through 250 rounds per gun in 24 hours (in one day). Now we were down to 16 R.P.G. per day. I managed to scrounge some more, then, miraculously, more arrived. It had just been put into a barge and run ashore at high tide. The same with food—it was just dumped and you went and helped yourselves.

The ground is very flat there but there was one hill with a restaurant in the form of a windmill on top. I had to have an O.P. there. It sustained over 50 direct hits with 4.1" and 5.9" H.E. and was still standing (or half of it was) and only one man wounded.

On the last night two troops had to be destroyed and the detachments sent on to LA PANNE and I had to keep one troop in action until 1-30 a.m. I still had an F.O.O. out with the infantry, but his wireless was dis. and I could not get in touch with him. He came in about 11 p.m., badly wounded in the face, on a motor-cycle. His truck was also out of action. Three signallers were still out, so I had to get into my truck and go and fetch them. Pitch-dark. Along the coast road littered with vehicles that had been destroyed—road full of shell-holes—tram wire poles all over the place. Then through an avenue of trees, rather the same, only for poles read trees. All this time I had



seen our infantry withdrawing, then I didn't see any more and quite expected to see the Boche following up. Then up to a cross-roads at Oost—Dunkirk where there wasn't a brick standing for 100 yards in any direction, then on for half a mile till I couldn't get any further because of holes in the road and a burning farmhouse falling across. Still no signs of the signalers. So back I went and they rolled up a little later, having marched with the last infantry.

By 2 a.m. we had destroyed the last gun. My truck and a 30-cwt. for the skeleton detachments were quite close, but when we went to start it off, my car had been knocked out of action and the 30-cwt. so riddled that it blew up after half a mile. So we proceeded to walk only two miles to where we were supposed to embark—La Panne. We were met by the Div. Cmdr. who said that it was impossible and that nothing could live on the beach. We were to wait while his staff were doing a recce. for another route. We lay in the sand dunes, luckily, as some people in houses on the other side of the road got wiped out. Then, eventually, on to the beach, and tramp, tramp, tramp. Came the dawn and we were just inside France and the beach was black with people. Then the Boche planes arrived. We went into the sand dunes and slept for an hour or two. Then on again till about mid-day when we climbed into a boat. More bombing—one either side of the ship. Six p.m. arrived Folkestone. Everybody very tired, unwashed, unshaved and with our tails between our legs. But what a reception! The whole way every station we passed through, every village we passed, were crowds of cheering people.

One little sidelight before I finish. The N.A.A.F.I. had a huge warehouse in Lille. On our way back we were short of cigarettes so sent a three-tonner down. There was no one there so we borrowed about 500,000 cigarettes and a few crates of whisky, gin and champagne. But do you know that we never had time to drink that whisky. I tried hard but many a time just fell asleep over it. In the end we had to break the bottles and pour the cigarettes down a well.

Well, there you are—a rather disconnected series of events, very much potted, but I hope they may be of interest. Total casualties in the Bty., one Officer and three men wounded in action, and one Officer and 14 men drowned on the way home.



## REVIEWS

### OXFORD PAMPHLETS ON WORLD AFFAIRS

(*Oxford University Press, 3d.*)

The Gestapo	O. C. Gibbs	No. 36.
War & Treaties	Arnold D. McNair	No. 37.
South Africa	E. A. Walker	No. 39.
Latin America	Robin A. Humphreys	No. 43.
The Military Aeroplane	E. Colshn Shepherd	No. 44.
The Jewish Question	James Parkes	No. 45.
Germany's "New Order"	Duncan Wilson	No. 46.
Canada	Graham Spry	No. 47.

In the latest batch of these excellent booklets the most topical, perhaps, is the brilliant little summary of Germany's "New Order." The author, writing in March last, makes the interesting point that full-blast German propaganda on this elusive (and illusory) theme only began after the defeat of the Luftwaffe in August-September, 1940. Renewed emphasis on it since the attack on Russia confirms the view that it is only brought into the foreground when Germany faces determined resistance. The implications of the New Order—the reduction of the rest of Europe beyond to the status of agricultural serfdom, providing food for Germany and consuming the products of German industry—are well known, but it is interesting to find that Italy is already being openly relegated to the "harvest helpers" class. Mr. Gibbs, writing on the Gestapo, surveys the New Order from another angle, that of the Nazi Secret Police, whose organisation and rather sensational brutalities are described in a well-informed manner.

Of great general interest is Professor McNair's Essay on War and Treaties. We are inclined to forget that international law is a bulwark of the *status quo* and the author rightly points out that until some machinery—more satisfactory than Article 15 of the Covenant of the League of Nations—is set up for treaty revision, wars are inevitable.

The pamphlet on the Jewish Problem throws some stimulating light on another international question but the admitted growth of anti-Semitism in countries where this disease has

hitherto lain dormant—Lindbergh's recent speeches in the States are significant—makes it difficult to be hopeful of any final solution, the author of the pamphlet himself does not offer one.

Anti-Semitism also features in the pamphlet on South Africa. Any reader of this must feel conscious of the many disintegrating factors in South African life. It was fortunate for the Empire that Field Marshal Smuts was able to direct a sufficient volume of opinion towards the common cause against Germany and away from the dangerously Nazi sentiments of Dr. Malan and Mr. Pirow. Canada, too, has its problems of unity and, for some years before the war, as Mr. Spry shows, it was by no means certain that another European war would not find Canada a friendly neutral rather than an active participant. People in the United Kingdom are dangerously complacent about these matters and it is interesting to find Mr. Spry pointing out that by Canadians the Royal Visit, so happy in its timing before the war, was regarded as a symbol more of Canadian than Imperial unity.

Dr Humphrey's pamphlet on Latin America is necessarily a great feat of compression when it is realized that it is "the richest raw-material producing area in the world free from the domination of any great power." There are signs that Britain's neglect of this part of the world is ceasing and in spite of the large population of Axis descent, the help given by many famous Britons in the South American Wars of Independence should prove of great value.

The last pamphlet, on the Military Aeroplane, deals with general principles rather than existing types of machines and hence does not "date" in spite of being written last February. Laymen, particularly, will find their appreciation of the radio and newspapers greatly improved by reading this.

V. E. S.

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### BRITAIN'S BLOCKADE

By R. W. B. CLARKE

(*Oxford University Press, 3d.*)

First added to the "Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs" in October, this small volume had already been reprinted twice before the end of last year. And with reason, for its thirty odd pages contrive to cover most of the ground. The author, a specialist in the economic problems of war, here sets forth the

aims and methods of the blockade, with special reference to the strategy of aerial bombardment, in a manner that makes for easy reading.

In an extremely clear, though necessarily condensed, review of our objectives, the admission is made that, in the first eight months of the war, owing to technical difficulties the blockade failed in possible effectiveness. By last autumn, however, these obstacles had to a large extent been overcome: fewer neutrals made for simpler administration. Mr. Clarke then goes on to describe the relative poverty of Europe's natural resources. From oil and coal to metals and textiles, all the vital raw materials are inadequate. It is not fully realised that although it receives most publicity, the European deficiency in food is actually less striking than that of other supplies. As the author explains, save in abnormal harvest years she is self-sufficient in food—of a sort. The next section of the pamphlet, dealing with the position in 1940-1, makes even more interesting study, since it gives the results of last year's harvests, this year's prospects and the effects of German aggression upon agriculture in general: going on to deal with the question of relief for occupied territories. Stress is laid on the big adjustment from former scales of living to the dreary standards of the Nazis: in the author's neat phrase "The market-place has become the Adolf Hitler Platz."

In view of the present situation in France and the Low countries, it is useful to be reminded of how, in the last war, American attempts to relieve near-starvation were impeded. The survey there concludes with a brief outline of the prospects of Britain's blockade in perspective; Mr. Clarke has good reasons to suppose that from this summer onwards the enemy will be conscious of definite economic weaknesses. So, on a note of restrained confidence, ends a valuable contribution to an excellent series of pamphlets. Economists are not noted for their optimism—very much the reverse; even this degree of hope is therefore most encouraging and reassuring.

A. G. B.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR 1940

### 1. FINANCE

The auditor's report is before the members of the council: the statement of accounts has been issued to all members of the Institution. The auditor's report is satisfactory. Income from subscriptions and advertisements in the journal has declined. Expenditure has been generally reduced, principally on the journal which has, however, maintained a satisfactory standard under prevailing circumstances. As a result the year's working shows an income over expenditure of Rs. 6,403-8-10 against Rs. 4,989-13-7 the year before.

The financial position of the Institution remains sound. The balance on capital account stands at Rs. 1,29,205.

Rs. 15,000 were invested in 3 per cent Defence Bonds, 1946. Investments, Post Office Cash Certificates and fixed deposit total Rs. 87,596. Investments had however depreciated in value at the end of the year by a net amount of Rs. 1,008 below cost. Cash and other balances amount to Rs. 10,570.

### 2. MEMBERSHIP

The result of the war has apparently been that a number of members have resigned prematurely while others have failed to pay their subscriptions while neglecting to resign.

Sixty-five ordinary members were enrolled during the year against 74 ordinary members died or resigned. 22 members were struck off for non-payment of subscriptions leaving a net reduction of 31. This is a lower net reduction than the previous year, but only because special measures were taken to extend membership.

A further 53 members have had to be struck off for non-payment of subscription, since the close of the year; although it is possible that some of these may pay up in due course.

On 31st December, 1940, the position was:

Life members	...	391
Honorary member	...	1
Ordinary members	...	1,398
		<hr/>
		1,790

The small reduction during the last two years is satisfactory in the circumstances and there are signs that membership will continue at a satisfactory total.

### 3. *LIBRARY*

The library has now been fully card-indexed on a proper system and the new catalogue has been issued. Purchase of suitable books continues and the popularity of the library is maintained.

Eighty-three books were added during the year and 540 borrowed.

It is hoped that members will make suggestions for the purchase of volumes likely to be of interest or value.

### 4. *JOURNAL*

As mentioned, the standard of the Journal has been maintained; but more contributions would be welcomed. Entries for the Prize Essay were disappointing in numbers and did not merit the award of the medal.

### 5. *LECTURES*

During the year the following lectures were delivered at Simla and were well attended. His Excellency the Viceroy honoured the Institution with his presence at the lecture on the "Air Warfare."

1. "Archæology" by Mr. H. Waddington.
2. "Air Warfare" by Air Commodore A. Claud Wright, A.F.C.
3. "Naval Warfare" by Commander J. Ryland, R.I.N.
4. "Land Warfare" by Brigadier E. E. Dorman-Smith, M.C.
5. "The Theatre of War in Africa and the Middle East"  
by Lieut.-Colonel C. A. Osborne.



# The Journal

## OF THE

# United Service Institution of India

Vol. LXXI

JANUARY, 1941

No. 302

*The views expressed in this Journal are in no sense official, and the opinions of contributors in their published articles are not necessarily those of the Council of the Institution.*

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The Journal

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His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

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- His Excellency the Governor of the Punjab.
- His Excellency the Governor of Bihar.
- His Excellency the Governor of Central Provinces.
- His Excellency the Governor of Assam.
- His Excellency the Governor of the N. W. Frontier Province.
- His Excellency the Governor of Sind.
- His Excellency the Governor of Orissa.
- The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Northern Command.
- The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command.
- The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Command.

## MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL, 1940-41.

### *Ex officio Members*

1. The Chief of the General Staff (President).
2. The Air Officer Commanding, Air Forces in India (Vice-President).
3. The Secretary, Defence Department.
4. The Secretary, External Affairs Department.

### *Elected Members.*

- |   |  |
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| 1. Major-General N. M. Wilson, C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E. | 5. Dr. T. E. Gregory, D.Sc.                    |
| 2. Major-General C. A. Bird, D.S.O.                 | 6. Colonel E. Wood, M.C.                       |
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| 4. F. Tymms, Esq., C.I.E., M.C.                     | 8. Major W. E. Maxwell, C.I.E.                 |

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Secretary and Editor

.. Major G. T. Wheeler.

Assistant Secretary

.. Major D. Bosworth.

Bankers

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CHANGES IN THEIR ADDRESSES.

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2. Officers wishing to become members of the United Service Institution of India should apply to the secretary.
3. The reading room of the Institution is provided with the leading illustrated papers, newspapers, magazines, and journals of Service interest that are published.
4. There is a well-stocked library in the Institution, from which members can obtain books on loan free. Members not resident in Simla may have books from the library sent to them *post free*. (See Secretary's Notes).
5. The Institution publishes a Quarterly Journal in the months of January, April, July and October which is issued, postage free, to members in any part of the world.
6. Members and the public are invited to contribute articles to the Journal of the Institution for which payment is made. Information for the guidance of contributors will be found in the Secretary's Notes.

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Other gentlemen may become members if proposed and seconded by a member of the Institution and approved by the Council.

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7. If a member fails to pay his subscription for any year (commencing 1st January) by 1st June of that year, a registered notice shall be sent to him by the Secretary inviting his attention to the fact. If the subscription is not paid by 1st January following, his name shall be struck off the roll of members and, if the Executive Committee so decide, posted in the hall of the Institution for six months, or until the subscription is paid.

8. An ordinary member wishing to resign at any time during a year in which one or more Journals have been sent to him must pay his subscription in full for that year and notify his wish to resign before his name can be struck off the list of members.

9. Members who join the Institution on or after the 1st October and pay the entrance fee and annual subscription on joining will not be charged a further subscription on the following 1st January, unless the Journals for the current year have been supplied.

10. Members are responsible that they keep the Secretary carefully posted in regard to changes of rank and address. Duplicate copies of the Journal will not be supplied free to members when the original has been posted to a member's last known address and has not been returned by the post.

11. All communications should be addressed to the Secretary, United Service Institution of India, Simla.



*I.—NEW MEMBERS*

The following new members joined the Institution from 1st September to 30th November, 1940:

Air-Marshal Sir P. H. L. Playfair, K.B.E., C.B., C.V.O., M.C.  
Brigadier E. McGuinness, M.I.M.E.  
Lieut.-Colonel S. M. Hepworth, I.M.S.  
Major L. A. H. Nash, E.D.  
Major W. F. Webb.  
Captain G. L. Auret.  
Captain A. M. S. Babington.  
Captain M. D. Radcliffe.  
Captain L. G. Young.  
Lieut. I. E. S. Orbell.  
Lieut. W. A. Shaw, B.A., R.E.  
Lieut. E. G. W. T. Walsh.  
J. C. W. Eustace, Esq., I.C.S.  
G. M. Jadhav, Esq.

*II.—CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE JOURNAL*

Preference is given to articles dealing with naval, military or air force matters likely to be of topical interest to the majority of readers of the Journal. Historical articles should have a direct bearing on the present war. One entirely non-military story and one article of financial interest to officers is included in each number of the Journal. The latter may be concerned with travel, sport, housing or any other subject which affects officers' pay and expenditure.

Articles may vary in length up to ten thousand words. They should be submitted in duplicate and typewritten, with double spacing between lines, on one side of the paper. Manuscript articles cannot be considered. Payment up to Rs. 150 is made on publication according to the value of the contribution.

With reference to R.A.I., Paragraph 333, and K.R. 535, the Executive Council of the Institution will take action, when necessary, to obtain the sanction of the Chief of the General Staff to the publication of an article in the Journal.

Members who wish to remain anonymous will inform the Secretary of the fact and include a pen-name if they so wish. In such cases the real name of the author is known to nobody except the Secretary, who has been instructed to divulge it to no one.

The Committee reserve to themselves the right to omit or amend any matter; if such alterations affect the sense of the article, it will be referred to the author before publication, unless the author has stated that the article may be edited as thought necessary without reference to him.

The April number of the Journal goes to Press on February 25th. Editing and selecting articles takes about ten days, so, as a general rule, articles should be submitted to the editor by February 15th. An article which may not be edited without reference to the author should arrive at least ten days earlier. From the Editor's point of view, February 1st is about the ideal date on which to receive articles. All these dates apply equivalently to the other numbers of the Journal.

### III.—READING ROOM AND LIBRARY

(1) The library is only open to members, who are requested to look on books as not transferable to their friends.

Books are only issued on loan to members who are resident in India. Members borrowing books from the library in person must make the necessary entry in the register and record their address in India.

(2) Applications for books from members at outstations are dealt with as early as possible and books are sent post free by registered parcel post. They must be returned, carefully packed, by registered parcel post within two months of the date of issue, or immediately on recall.

(3) A member may not have on loan, at any one time, more than three books or sets of books without the Secretary's permission. Papers, magazines and works catalogued under the headings of "Works of Reference," "Not to be taken out" and "Confidential" may not be removed from the Institution.

(4) No particular limit is set on the number of days for which a member may keep a book, the Council wishing to make the library as useful as possible to members. This rule is, however, subject to the following limitations:

(a) If, after the expiration of three weeks from the date of issue, a book is wanted by another member, it will be recalled.

(b) A member wishing to retain a book for a period over *two* months from the date of issue must notify the Secretary to that effect, otherwise the book will be recalled.

(5) If a book is not returned within fourteen days of the date of recall, it must be paid for, if so required by the Executive Committee. Lost and defaced books shall be replaced at the cost of the member to whom they were issued. In the case of lost or defaced books that are out of print, the value shall be fixed by the Executive Committee and the member will be required to pay the cost so fixed.

(6) The issue of a book under these rules to any member implies the latter's compliance with the rules and the willingness to have them enforced, if necessary, against him.

(7) The re-cataloguing of the library has been completed. The new catalogue is now available at Rs. 2-8-0 per copy plus postage.

#### IV.—OLD BOOKS AND TROPHIES

The Institution is in possession of a collection of old and rare books presented by members from time to time and, while such books are not available for circulation, they can be seen by members visiting Simla.

The Secretary will be glad to acknowledge the gift of books, trophies, medals, etc., presented to the Institution.

#### V.—HISTORICAL RESEARCH

The U. S. I. is prepared to supply members and units with typewritten copies of old Indian Army List pages, at the rate of Rs. 2 per typewritten page.

#### VI.—THE MacGREGOR MEMORIAL MEDAL

1. The MacGregor Memorial Medal was founded in 1888 as a memorial to the late Major-General Sir Charles MacGregor who founded the United Service Institution of India. The medals are awarded for the best military reconnaissances or journeys of exploration of the year.

2. The following awards are made annually in the month of June:

(a) For officers—British or Indian—silver medal.

(b) For soldiers—British or Indian—silver medal with Rs. 100 gratuity.

3. For especially valuable work, a gold medal may be awarded in place of one of the silver medals, or in addition to the silver medals, whenever the administrators of the Fund deem it desirable. Also the Council may award a special additional silver medal without gratuity, to a soldier, for especially good work.

4. The award of medals is made by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India, as Vice-Patron, and the Council of the United Service Institution of India, who were appointed administrators of the Fund by the MacGregor Memorial Committee.

5. The following are eligible for the award, whether at the time of the reconnaissance they were in military or civil employ:

(a) Officers and other ranks of the Royal Navy, Army, Royal Air Force and of the Dominion Forces, while serving on the Indian establishment.

- (b) Officers and other ranks of the Royal Indian Navy, Indian Army, Indian Air Force and of the Indian States Forces, wherever serving.

Note.—The term "Indian Army" includes the Indian Auxiliary and Territorial Forces, Frontier Militia, Levies, Military Police and Military Corps under local governments.

6. The medal may be worn in uniform by Indian soldiers on ceremonial parades, suspended round the neck by the ribbon issued with the medal.\*

7. Personal risk to life during the reconnaissance or exploration is not a necessary qualification for the award of the medal; but, in the event of two journeys being of equal value, the man who has incurred the greater risk will be considered to have the greater claim to the award.

8. When the work of the year has either not been of sufficient value or notice of it has been received too late for consideration before the Council Meeting, the medal may be awarded for any reconnaissance during previous years considered by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India to deserve it.

#### VII.—GOLD MEDAL PRIZE ESSAY COMPETITION

The Council has chosen the following subject for the Gold Medal Prize Essay Competition for 1941:

"The Defence Organisation of a Dominion India."

The following are the conditions of the competition:

- (1) The competition is open to all gazetted officers of the Civil Administration in India and to all commissioned officers of His Majesty's Forces including Territorial Forces, wherever those forces have been raised and to officers of the Indian States Forces.
- (2) Essays must be typewritten and submitted in triplicate.
- (3) When reference is made to any work, the title of such work is to be quoted.
- (4) Essays are to be strictly anonymous. Each must have a motto, and, enclosed with the essay, there should be sent a sealed envelope with the motto written on the outside and the name of the competitor inside.
- (5) Essays will not be accepted unless received by the Secretary on or before the 30th June 1941.
- (6) Essays will be submitted for adjudication to three judges chosen by the Council. The judges may recommend a money award, not exceeding Rs. 500, either in addition to, or in substitution for, the medal. The decision of the three judges will be submitted to the

---

\*Replacements of the ribbon may be obtained on payment from the Secretary, U.S.I., Simla.



Council, who will decide whether the medal is to be awarded and whether the essay is to be published. The name of the successful candidate will be published in the October 1941 number of the Journal.

- (7) All essays submitted are to become the property of the United Service Institution of India absolutely, and authors will not be at liberty to make any use whatsoever of their essays without the sanction of the Council.
- (8) Essays should not exceed fifteen pages of the size and style of the Journal exclusive of any appendices, tables or maps.

#### VIII.—ADDRESSES

The difficulties of tracing addresses are now very much increased. Members are earnestly requested to keep the Secretary informed of changes in their addresses or if possible give a permanent address which will always find them, e.g., a Bank.

#### IX.—HONORARY MEMBERSHIP OF THE ROYAL UNITED SERVICE INSTITUTION

Honorary membership of the Royal United Service Institution, Whitehall, London, S.W.1, is extended to commissioned officers of any military unit from the Dominions, India, or the Colonies, who may be visiting the United Kingdom during the war. They will be admitted to the Institution's premises on presentation of their cards.

#### X.—A. H. Q. STAFF COLLEGE COURSE SERIES, 1939

Sets of papers of the abovementioned series, with 4 maps, are available for sale at Rs. 8 per set.

- (i) *Precis of lectures and papers* ... Rs. 2/-
- (ii) *Strategy and Tactics papers, including*  
4 maps ... Rs. 6/-

#### XI.—"THE COVER OF THE JOURNAL"

135 members recorded their votes regarding the new cover for the journal. The votes were as follows:—

- 15 approved of no alteration.
- 56 approved of the new cover in black.
- 44 approved of the new cover in different colours for each quarter.
- 20 approved of the new cover printed in various colours.

On this voting it has been decided to adopt the new cover in black, but the possibility of adopting different colours for each quarter will be considered later if members so wish."



# The Journal

## OF THE

### United Service Institution of India

Vol. LXXI

APRIL, 1941

No. 303

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## **United Service Institution of India**

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*I.—NEW MEMBERS*

The following new members joined the Institution from 1st December, 1940 to 28th February, 1941:

Lieut.-General C. N. F. Broad, C.B., D.S.O.

Colonel K. B. S. Crawford, R.E.

Major W. H. FitzMaurice.

Major D. H. Mudie.

Major F. H. W. Ross-Lewin.

Captain C. J. Tobin.

Lieut. M. E. Cooke.

Lieut.-Qmr. C. Cutting.

2/Lieut. J. D. Hamilton.

2/Lieut. W. H. H. Young.

*II.—CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE JOURNAL*

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3. For especially valuable work, a gold medal may be awarded in place of one of the silver medals, or in addition to the silver medals, whenever the administrators of the Fund deem it desirable. Also the Council may award a special additional silver medal without gratuity, to a soldier, for especially good work.

4. The award of medals is made by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India, as Vice-Patron, and the Council of the United Service Institution of India, who were appointed administrators of the Fund by the MacGregor Memorial Committee.

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- (a) Officers and other ranks of the Royal Navy, Army, Royal Air Force and of the Dominion Forces, while serving on the Indian establishment.

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Note.—The term "Indian Army" includes the Indian Auxiliary and Territorial Forces, Frontier Militia, Levies, Military Police and Military Corps under local governments.

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8. When the work of the year has either not been of sufficient value or notice of it has been received too late for consideration before the Council Meeting, the medal may be awarded for any reconnaissance during previous years considered by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India to deserve it.

#### VII.—GOLD MEDAL PRIZE ESSAY COMPETITION

The Council has chosen the following subject for the Gold Medal Prize Essay Competition for 1941:

"The Defence Organisation of a Dominion India."

The following are the conditions of the competition:

- (1) The competition is open to all gazetted officers of the Civil Administration in India and to all commissioned officers of His Majesty's Forces including Territorial Forces, wherever those forces have been raised and to officers of the Indian States Forces.
- (2) Essays must be typewritten and submitted in triplicate.
- (3) When reference is made to any work, the title of such work is to be quoted.
- (4) Essays are to be strictly anonymous. Each must have a motto, and, enclosed with the essay, there should be sent a sealed envelope with the motto written on the outside and the name of the competitor inside.
- (5) Essays will not be accepted unless received by the Secretary on or before the 30th June 1941.
- (6) Essays will be submitted for adjudication to three judges chosen by the Council. The judges may recommend a money award, not exceeding Rs. 500, either in addition to, or in substitution for, the medal. The decision of the three judges will be submitted to the

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\*Replacements of the ribbon may be obtained on payment from the Secretary, U.S.I., Simla.



Council, who will decide whether the medal is to be awarded and whether the essay is to be published. The name of the successful candidate will be published in the October 1941 number of the Journal.

- (7) All essays submitted are to become the property of the United Service Institution of India absolutely, and authors will not be at liberty to make any use whatsoever of their essays without the sanction of the Council.
- (8) Essays should not exceed fifteen pages of the size and style of the Journal exclusive of any appendices, tables or maps.

#### *VIII.—ADDRESSES*

The difficulties of tracing addresses are now very much increased. Members are earnestly requested to keep the Secretary informed of changes in their addresses or if possible give a permanent address which will always find them, *e.g.*, a Bank.

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Honorary membership of the Royal United Service Institution, Whitehall, London, S.W.1, is extended to commissioned officers of any military unit from the Dominions, India, or the Colonies, who may be visiting the United Kingdom during the war. They will be admitted to the Institution's premises on presentation of their cards.

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| (i) Precis of lectures and papers           | ... Rs. 2/- |
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# The Journal

## OF THE

# United Service Institution of India

Vol. LXXI

JULY, 1941

No. 304

*The views expressed in this Journal are in no sense official, and the opinions of contributors in their published articles are not necessarily those of the Council of the Institution.*

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His Excellency the Governor of the N. W. Frontier Province.  
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His Excellency the Governor of Orissa.  
The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Northern Command.  
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The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Command.

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#### *Ex officio Members*

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3. The Secretary, Defence Department.
4. The Secretary, External Affairs Department.

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2. Officers wishing to become members of the United Service Institution of India should apply to the secretary.
3. The reading room of the Institution is provided with the leading illustrated papers, newspapers, magazines, and journals of Service interest that are published.
4. There is a well-stocked library in the Institution, from which members can obtain books on loan free. Members not resident in Simla may have books from the library sent to them *post free*. (See Secretary's Notes).
5. The Institution publishes a Quarterly Journal in the months of January, April, July and October which is issued, postage free, to members in any part of the world.
6. Members and the public are invited to contribute articles to the Journal of the Institution for which payment is made. Information for the guidance of contributors will be found in the Secretary's Notes.

### Rules of Membership

1. All officers of the Defence Services, whether they belong to the Imperial Forces, to forces raised by the Government of India, by an Indian State, by a British Dominion or Colony, and all gazetted officials of the Government of India or of a Provincial Government shall be entitled to become members, without ballot, on payment of the entrance fee and subscription.

Other gentlemen may become members if proposed and seconded by a member of the Institution and approved by the Council.

2. Life members of the Institution shall be admitted on payment of a lump sum of Rs. 160, which sum includes entrance fee.

3. Ordinary members of the Institution shall be admitted on payment of an entrance fee (see para. 4) of Rs. 10 on joining, and an annual subscription of Rs. 10 (or 15s.) to be paid in advance.

The period of subscription commences on the 1st January.

An ex-member on rejoining the Institution will be charged a second entrance fee of Rs. 10 if since the date on which he ceased to be a member he has served or resided in India. In other cases no charge will be made.

4. British Service, Dominion and Colonial officers serving in India shall pay an entrance fee of Rs. 7 only.

5. Members receive the Journal of the Institution post free to any part of the world. Members in India may obtain books from the library which are issued postage free; the borrower will pay the return postage.

6. Government institutions and offices, military libraries, messes and clubs wishing to subscribe for the Journal shall pay Rs. 10 per annum. Non-members shall pay Rs. 10 per annum plus postage. Single copies of the Journal will be supplied to non-members at Rs. 2-8-0 per copy, plus postage.

7. If a member fails to pay his subscription for any year (commencing 1st January) by 1st June of that year, a registered notice shall be sent to him by the Secretary inviting his attention to the fact. If the subscription is not paid by 1st January following, his name shall be struck off the roll of members and, if the Executive Committee so decide, posted in the hall of the Institution for six months, or until the subscription is paid.

8. An ordinary member wishing to resign at any time during a year in which one or more Journals have been sent to him must pay his subscription in full for that year and notify his wish to resign before his name can be struck off the list of members.

9. Members who join the Institution on or after the 1st October and pay the entrance fee and annual subscription on joining will not be charged a further subscription on the following 1st January, unless the Journals for the current year have been supplied.

10. Members are responsible that they keep the Secretary carefully posted in regard to changes of rank and address. Duplicate copies of the Journal will not be supplied free to members when the original has been posted to a member's last known address and has not been returned by the post.

11. All communications should be addressed to the Secretary, United Service Institution of India, Simla.



*I.—NEW MEMBERS*

The following new members joined the Institution from 1st March to 31st May 1941:

H. E. Sir Bertrand Glancy, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., I.C.S., Governor of Punjab.

H. E. Sir Henry Twynam, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., Governor of C.P., and Berar.

Major J. L. Hillard.

Major W. D. Joyce.

Captain A. L. Atter.

Captain E. Johnson.

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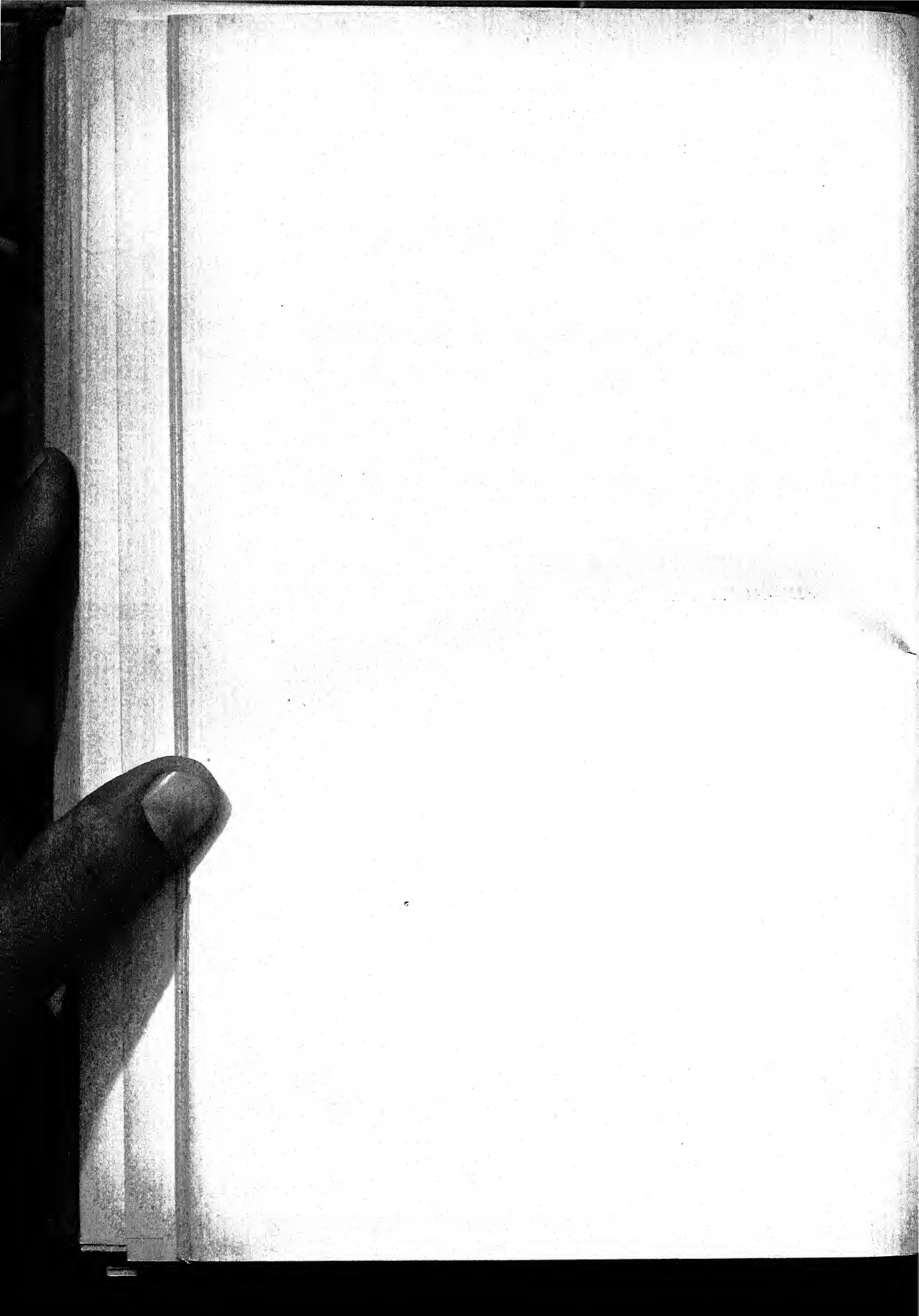
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March 31, 1914

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| 4. Brigadier E. Wood, M.C.,<br>C.I.E.         | 8. Group Captain A. L. A.<br>Perry-Keene, O.B.E., R.A.F. |

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Members : Major-General F. I. S. Tucker, O.B.E.

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1. All officers of the Defence Services, whether they belong to the Imperial Forces, to forces raised by the Government of India, by an Indian State, by a British Dominion or Colony, and all gazetted officials of the Government of India or of a Provincial Government shall be entitled to become members, without ballot, on payment of the entrance fee and subscription.

Other gentlemen may become members if proposed and seconded by a member of the Institution and approved by the Council.

2. Life members of the Institution shall be admitted on payment of a lump sum of Rs. 160, which sum includes entrance fee.

3. Ordinary members of the Institution shall be admitted on payment of an entrance fee\* (see para. 4) of Rs. 10 on joining, and an annual subscription of Rs. 10 (or 15s.) to be paid in advance.

The period of subscription commences on the 1st January.

An ex-member on rejoining the Institution will be charged a second entrance fee of Rs. 10 if since the date on which he ceased to be a member he has served or resided in India. In other cases no charge will be made.

4. British Service, Dominion and Colonial officers serving in India shall pay an entrance fee\* of Rs. 7 only.

5. Members receive the Journal of the Institution post free to any part of the world. Members in India may obtain books from the library which are issued postage free; the borrower will pay the return postage.

6. Government institutions and offices, military libraries, messes and clubs wishing to subscribe for the Journal shall pay Rs. 10 per annum. Non-members shall pay Rs. 10 per annum plus postage. Single copies of the Journal will be supplied to non-members at Rs. 2-8-0 per copy, plus postage.

7. If a member fails to pay his subscription for any year (commencing 1st January) by 1st June of that year, a registered notice shall be sent to him by the Secretary inviting his attention to the fact. If the subscription is not paid by 1st January following, his name shall be struck off the roll of members and, if the Executive Committee so decide, posted in the hall of the Institution for six months, or until the subscription is paid.

8. An ordinary member wishing to resign at any time during a year in which one or more Journals have been sent to him must pay his subscription in full for that year and notify his wish to resign before his name can be struck off the list of members.

9. Members who join the Institution on or after the 1st October and pay the entrance fee and annual subscription on joining will not be charged a further subscription on the following 1st January, unless the Journals for the current year have been supplied.

10. Members are responsible that they keep the Secretary carefully posted in regard to changes of rank and address. Duplicate copies of the Journal will not be supplied free to members when the original has been posted to a member's last known address and has not been returned by the post.

11. All communications should be addressed to the Secretary, United Service Institution of India, Simla.

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\* For the duration of the war, the entrance fees shall be waived.



*I.—NEW MEMBERS*

The following new members joined the Institution from 1st June to 30th September, 1941:

H. E. General Sir Archibald P. Wavell, G.C.B., C.M.G., M.C.

Lieut.-General T. S. Riddell-Webster, C.B., D.S.O.

Brigadier E. O. Wheeler, M.C.

Lieut.-Colonel J. V. Brewin, M.C.

Major J. Gold.

Captain D. C. S. David, R.E.

Lieut. K. M. Dibben.

Lieut. A. R. Judd.

<sup>2</sup>/Lieut. Kewal Kishan.

Mr. Jossleyn Hennessy.

*II.—CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE JOURNAL*

Preference is given to articles dealing with naval, military or air force matters likely to be of topical interest to the majority of readers of the Journal. Historical articles should have a direct bearing on the present war. One entirely non-military story and one article of financial interest to officers is included in each number of the Journal. The latter may be concerned with travel, sport, housing or any other subject which affects officers' pay and expenditure.

Articles may vary in length up to ten thousand words. They should be submitted in duplicate and typewritten, with double spacing between lines, on one side of the paper. Manuscript articles cannot be considered. Payment up to Rs. 150 is made on publication according to the value of the contribution.

With reference to R.A.I., Paragraph 333, and K.R. 535, the Executive Council of the Institution will take action, when necessary, to obtain the sanction of the Chief of the General Staff to the publication of an article in the Journal.

Members who wish to remain anonymous will inform the Secretary of the fact and include a pen-name if they so wish. In such cases the real name of the author is known to nobody except the Secretary, who has been instructed to divulge it to no one.

The Committee reserve to themselves the right to omit or amend any matter; if such alterations affect the sense of the article, it will be referred to the author before publication, unless the author has stated that the article may be edited as thought necessary without reference to him.

The January number of the Journal goes to Press on November 25th. Editing and selecting articles takes about ten days, so, as a general rule, articles should be submitted to the editor by November 15th. An article which may not be edited without reference to the author should arrive at least ten days earlier. From the Editor's point of view, November 1st is about the ideal date on which to receive articles. All these dates apply equivalently to the other numbers of the Journal

### III.—READING ROOM AND LIBRARY

(1) The library is only open to members, who are requested to look on books as not transferable to their friends.

Books are only issued on loan to members who are resident in India. Members borrowing books from the library in person must make the necessary entry in the register and record their address in India.

(2) Applications for books from members at outstations are dealt with as early as possible and books are sent post free by registered parcel post. They must be returned, carefully packed, by registered parcel post within two months of the date of issue, or immediately on recall.

(3) A member may not have on loan, at any one time, more than three books or sets of books without the Secretary's permission. Papers, magazines and works catalogued under the headings of "Works of Reference," "Not to be taken out" and "Confidential" may not be removed from the Institution.

(4) No particular limit is set on the number of days for which a member may keep a book, the Council wishing to make the library as useful as possible to members. This rule is, however, subject to the following limitations:

(a) If, after the expiration of three weeks from the date of issue, a book is wanted by another member, it will be recalled.

(b) A member wishing to retain a book for a period over two months from the date of issue must notify the Secretary to that effect, otherwise the book will be recalled.

(5) If a book is not returned within fourteen days of the date of recall, it must be paid for, if so required by the Executive Committee. Lost and defaced books shall be replaced at the cost of the member to whom they were issued. In the case of lost or defaced books that are out of print, the value shall be fixed by the Executive Committee and the member will be required to pay the cost so fixed.

(6) The issue of a book under these rules to any member implies the latter's compliance with the rules and the willingness to have them enforced, if necessary, against him.

(7) The revised 1940 catalogue is available at Rs. 2-8-0 per copy plus postage.

#### IV.—OLD BOOKS AND TROPHIES

The Institution is in possession of a collection of old and rare books presented by members from time to time and, while such books are not available for circulation, they can be seen by members visiting Simla.

The Secretary will be glad to acknowledge the gift of books, trophies, medals, etc., presented to the Institution.

#### V.—HISTORICAL RESEARCH

The U. S. I. is prepared to supply members and units with typewritten copies of old Indian Army List pages, at the rate of Rs. 2 per typewritten page.

#### VI.—THE MacGREGOR MEMORIAL MEDAL

1. The MacGregor Memorial Medal was founded in 1888 as a memorial to the late Major-General Sir Charles MacGregor who founded the United Service Institution of India. The medals are awarded for the best military reconnaissances or journeys of exploration of the year.

2. The following awards are made annually in the month of June:

(a) For officers—British or Indian—silver medal.

(b) For soldiers—British or Indian—silver medal with Rs. 100 gratuity.

3. For especially valuable work, a gold medal may be awarded in place of one of the silver medals, or in addition to the silver medals, whenever the administrators of the Fund deem it desirable. Also the Council may award a special additional silver medal without gratuity, to a soldier, for especially good work.

4. The award of medals is made by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India, as Vice-Patron, and the Council of the United Service Institution of India, who were appointed administrators of the Fund by the MacGregor Memorial Committee.

5. The following are eligible for the award, whether at the time of the reconnaissance they were in military or civil employ:

(a) Officers and other ranks of the Royal Navy, Army, Royal Air Force and of the Dominion Forces, while serving on the Indian establishment.

- (b) Officers and other ranks of the Royal Indian Navy, Indian Army, Indian Air Force and of the Indian States Forces, wherever serving.

Note.—The term "Indian Army" includes the Indian Auxiliary and Territorial Forces, Frontier Militia, Levies, Military Police and Military Corps under local governments.

6. The medal may be worn in uniform by Indian soldiers on ceremonial parades, suspended round the neck by the ribbon issued with the medal.\*

7. Personal risk to life during the reconnaissance or exploration is not a necessary qualification for the award of the medal: but, in the event of two journeys being of equal value, the man who has incurred the greater risk will be considered to have the greater claim to the award.

8. When the work of the year has either not been of sufficient value or notice of it has been received too late for consideration before the Council Meeting, the medal may be awarded for any reconnaissance during previous years considered by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India to deserve it.

#### VII.—GOLD MEDAL PRIZE ESSAY COMPETITION

The Council has chosen the following subject for the Gold Medal Prize Essay Competition for 1942.

"In modern warfare the interests and operations of the three services—land, sea, and air—are inseparable. A doctrine of "Combined Warfare" in the widest sense of these words is necessary. Outline such a doctrine, and the organization to implement it, in relation with the problem of Imperial Defence."

The following are the conditions of the competition:

- (1) The competition is open to all gazetted officers of the Civil Administration in India and to all commissioned officers of His Majesty's Forces including Territorial Forces, wherever those forces have been raised and to officers of the Indian States Forces.
- (2) Essays must be typewritten and submitted in triplicate.
- (3) When reference is made to any work, the title of such work is to be quoted.
- (4) Essays are to be strictly anonymous. Each must have a motto, and, enclosed with the essay, there should be sent a sealed envelope with the motto written on the outside and the name of the competitor inside.

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\*Replacements of the ribbon may be obtained on payment from the Secretary, U.S.I., Simla.

- (5) Essays will not be accepted unless received by the Secretary on or before the 30th June 1942.
- (6) Essays will be submitted for adjudication to three judges chosen by the Council. The judges may recommend a money award, not exceeding Rs. 500, either in addition to, or in substitution for, the medal. The decision of the three judges will be submitted to the Council, who will decide whether the medal is to be awarded and whether the essay is to be published. The name of the successful candidate will be published in the October 1942 number of the Journal.
- (7) All essays submitted are to become the property of the United Service Institution of India absolutely, and authors will not be at liberty to make any use whatsoever of their essays without the sanction of the Council.
- (8) Essays should not exceed fifteen pages of the size and style of the Journal exclusive of any appendices, tables or maps.

#### VIII.—ADDRESSES

The difficulties of tracing addresses are now very much increased. Members are earnestly requested to keep the Secretary informed of changes in their addresses or if possible give a permanent address which will always find them, e.g., a Bank.

#### IX.—HONORARY MEMBERSHIP OF THE ROYAL UNITED SERVICE INSTITUTION

Honorary membership of the Royal United Service Institution, Whitehall, London, S.W.1, is extended to commissioned officers of any military unit from the Dominions, India, or the Colonies, who may be visiting the United Kingdom during the war. They will be admitted to the Institution's premises on presentation of their cards.

#### X.—A. H. Q. STAFF COLLEGE COURSE SERIES, 1939

Sets of papers of the abovementioned series, with 4 maps, are available for sale at Rs. 8 per set.

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| (i) Precis of lectures and papers                     | ... | Rs. 2/- |
| (ii) Strategy and Tactics papers, including<br>4 maps | ... | Rs. 6/- |

#### XI.—ENTRANCE FEES

The Council of the Institution have decided that for the duration of the war entrance fees shall be waived. Ordinary members shall, therefore, be admitted to the Institution on payment of an annual subscription of Rs. 10/-



